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The Strategic Model of Organizational Crisis Communication:

An Investigation of the Relationships Between Crisis Type, Industry, and Communicative Strategies Used During Crises

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The Strategic Model of Organizational Crisis Communication: An Investigation of the Relationships Between Crisis Type, Industry, and Communicative Strategies Used During Crises

by

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Dedication

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The Strategic Model of Organizational Crisis Communication:

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For organizations crises are pervasive, difficult to keep quiet, challenging, unexpected, and can be catastrophic. Since the late 1970s, there has been a breadth of research focusing on crisis communication strategies. However, while our knowledge of what crisis response strategies exist and are used is broad, there is a dearth of research and analysis emphasizing relationships between response strategies, the influence of situation and organization, and outcomes. The present research proposes a Situational Model of Crisis Communication and begins to test the model in a cross-sectional sample of crises between November, 2004 and December, 2005 by focusing on the influence of type of organization and type of crisis on the message components of crisis response strategy and invocation of organizational culture. Findings indicate that organization and crisis type strongly influence message components, the invocation of organizational culture is an important component in crisis response messages and that the use of crisis response strategies emerges into eight particular approaches to crisis response in contemporary organizations.

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Chapter 1

Rationale: The Value in Examining Crisis Communication Messages

Introduction

For organizations they are pervasive, hard—if not impossible—to keep quiet, challenging, unexpected, and can be catastrophic. They are organizational crises. Organizational crises have been conceptualized in a fairly consistent manner and Pearson and Clair (1998) offer a concise definition, "An organizational crisis is a low-probability, high-impact event that threatens the viability of the organization and is characterized by ambiguity of cause, effect, and means of resolution, as well as by a belief that decisions must be made quickly." (p. 60) In recent history organizations have faced a range of crises with some notable examples being: Tylenol's arsenic crisis, Jack in the Box's *E. Coli* crisis; the crash of the *Exxon Valdez*; NASA's explosion of the *Challenger*, the Iran-Contra Affair, tainted blood from the American Red Cross, the tobacco industry and facing the tobacco settlement, Nike's labor practices, Enron's accounting scandal, and the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. These examples demonstrate some of the trends related to organizational crises: (a) crises affect all types of organizations; (b) causes of crises can range from circumstances entirely out of an organization's control to careless mistakes of individuals, to systematic break-downs or inefficiencies (Argenti, 2002; King, 2002; Pearson & Clair, 1998; Reilly, 1987); (c) they threaten organizations with effects ranging from financial, to environmental, to threats to life (Hayes & Patton, 2001; King, 2002; Pearson & Clair, 1998); and (d) media coverage of crises is an inescapable truth (Moore, 2004). What is also important to note is that organizational crises come in a host of shapes and sizes, and are not limited to simply public relations or financial crises. In fact, they can include many types of incidents such as: extortion, hostile takeovers,

product tampering, copyright infringement, environmental disasters, security issues, boycotts, homicides, rumors, natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and sexual harassment—just to name a few (Pearson & Clair, 1998). Mitroff, Alpaslan, and Green (2004) point out that a central challenge for organizations in managing crises is that they are often ill-structured and complex in nature.

Gonzales-Herrero and Pratt (1996) argue that the explosion of crises and the need for their active management by organizations is only going to increase in the years to come. It seems organizational executives already know these truths with nearly 90 percent of them acknowledging the likelihood of crises. The irony is that according to the same study, while only about half of these Fortune 500 executives had crisis management plans in place, 97 percent of them felt that they would be able to effectively manage a crisis without preparation. In lacking crisis management plans, these organizations lack a systematic effort to avert all crises possible and also lack existing mechanisms to manage those that do occur (King, 2002). This flies in the face of the growing body of literature and research on crisis management arguing that although organizations cannot predict what crisis they may face and when, a crisis management and communication plan ought to be in place. Such organizational crisis plans should include: brainstorming crises to which an organization may be susceptible; potential stakeholders affected; and potential crisis response strategies (see Dilenschneider & Hyde, 1985; Elsbach, Sutton, & Principe, 1998; Hayes & Patton, 2001; Henderson, 2003).

Crisis management represents systematic efforts to avert or manage crises involving decisions regarding relevant issues, publics, motivation, leadership, etc. (King,

2002); for example, getting to the scene, and having a crisis plan are often referred to as crisis management (e.g., Argenti, 2002; Delenschneider & Hyde, 1985; Elsbach et al., 1998; Sheaffer, 1998). In light of an inherent tension between preparation and executives' seeming efficacy in managing crisis communication (see , Gonzales-Herrero & Pratt, 1996) it begs the question, how do organizations manage their efforts in the face of organizational crises? One of the strengths and primary areas of scholarship in the crisis communication literature has focused on examinations of crisis management, effectively addressing issues ranging from issue management to post-crisis recovery (e.g., Hayes & Patton, 2001; Martinelli & Briggs, 1998). Much of the work endeavoring to examine how organizations manager their efforts during crises include examinations of: (a) assorted methods of crisis management employed by organizations (see Coombs & Schmidt, 2000; Martinelli & Briggs, 1998; Mohamed, Gardner, & Paolillo, 1999); (b) overall crisis management (see Elsbach et al., 1998; King, 2002; Loosemore, 1999); (c) crisis outcomes and evaluation (see Baucus & Baucus, 1997; Pearson & Clair, 1998; Ulmer, 2001); and (d) internal crisis management (see Glynn, 2000).

However, Heath and Millar (2004) argue that there are two separate dimensions to any crisis—the technical or managerial that deals with the actual dimensions of organizational crises and the communicative dimension to a crisis. Crisis communication involves communication between an organization and its stakeholders prior to, during, and after an organizational crisis (Heath & Millar, 2004; King, 2002). These messages can certainly include a host of forms and channels, but what defines them specifically as crisis communication messages (CCMs) is that they are explicitly linked to a specific

crisis or set of crisis issues. This definition suggests a wide variety of purposes and content that may be included in CCMs. However, one significant purpose of CCMs is to protect, preserve, or rebuild an organization's legitimacy[1]. As such, during crises organizations and their spokespersons are likely to develop verbal accounts about their situation. These messages are aimed at explaining, rationalizing, or legitimating the actions taken by the organization (Elsbach, 1994). Elsbach (1994) argues that these messages may affect an organization's legitimacy. As a result, organizational decision-makers are likely to be strategic in their selection and use of messages during organizational crises. One of the common areas of study in crisis communication, therefore, examines *crisis response strategy*. This refers to the selection of particular types of CCMs in an effort to protect the organization by eliminating or reducing the crisis situation's damage to the organization's legitimacy (Coombs & Holladay, 1996).

The Need for Theory Building in Crisis Communication

The strength in our knowledge of crisis communication is the depth of knowledge regarding individual crisis response strategies. The weakness of our knowledge of crisis communication is a failure to develop a theory-based set of connections between situational factors and crisis communication (Coombs & Holladay, 1996; 2004; Hearit & Courthright, 2003). This failure to understand the relationships between crisis situation and crisis communication makes difficult any endeavor to connect crisis communication with outcome specific to managing the organization's communication during a crisis. Pearson and Mitroff (1993) argue that organizations often contribute to their own crises.

[1] Organizational legitimacy is the perception of an organization's trustworthiness, recognizability, reputation, image, history of prosocial action, and expertise (Haley, 1996).

Therefore if we are to understand crises successful management and outcomes, we must first understand those variables that are likely to influence the type of communicative strategies employed during crises before we can legitimately examine the outcomes of crises. The present study represents a meaningful step toward building a more comprehensive model relating features of crisis situations to crisis communication messages used in contemporary organizational crises. In this section I will argue for the contributions such a study can make and briefly introduce the key crisis communication and situational concepts.

Contributions of a more comprehensive situational crisis communication model. In an editorial in the *Journal of Management*, Feldman (2004) argues that for a work to have a meaningful theoretical contribution it: (a) asks research questions that are non-trivial, that is those with an a priori reason to study them; (b) may be either theory-driven or phenomenon-driven depending on the knowledge development needs of the literature; (c) such works need to go beyond the synthesis of previous research to provide new insights, critiques, or directions for theory-testing—going beyond predecessors' results; and (d) that the differences postulated will make a difference. The proposed study meets each of these criteria.

Coombs and Holladay (1996; 2004) and Hearit and Courthright (2003) argue that our knowledge in crisis communication, while deep in understanding crises and many elements of crisis communication, has not progressed to be able to differentiate between crisis communication used in different types of situations. Coombs and Holladay (2004) develop a situational crisis communication theory that experimentally tests individual

cases for response strategies. They argue that developing a situational crisis communication theory is valuable and that the development of such a theory ought to be used to evaluate our knowledge of crisis communication. This suggests that a research study, like the one presented here, asking question about the relationships between situation/ context and crisis communication has a priori value in the study of crisis communication as a phenomenon.

Second, the present study emphasizes the phenomenon of crisis communication and endeavors to build more meaningful heuristics in order to understand the phenomenon. This is meaningful because if we are to understand crisis communication and crisis response strategies then we must endeavor to build models and theory specific to the phenomenon. This is presently lacking; while contemporary work like Millar and Heath's (2004) collection of research and contemporary knowledge on crisis communication includes applications of theories like Attribution Theory, Burkean Counternature, and Multidimensional Modeling, these theoretical applications either focus on the larger construct of crisis management—not crisis communication. This weakness is highlighted Coombs and Holladay's (2004) work, emphasizing the limitations in our theoretical application at present. Therefore the present is a phenomenon-driven work versus one where crisis communication is merely a side-product of crisis management.

Third, the present study will necessarily go beyond the synthesis of contemporary research to provide new insights, directions for future study, and theory building. At present, there have been limited studies endeavoring to explicate the relationships

between situation and crisis communication. Two studies of note are the aforementioned situational crisis communication theory experimental studies by Coombs and Holladay (2004) and Perry, Taylor, and Doerfel's (2003) study examining the influence of crisis type on the use of the Internet as a consistent channel of communication during crises. The authors in each of these studies note the need for a deeper development of theory in crisis communication, which is the central goal of this study. Therefore, one of the proposed study's primary contributions is to build on previous knowledge to develop a more comprehensive theory and begin testing elements of that theory.

Finally, the explication of relationships between situation or context and crisis communication will be independently useful. Coombs and Holladay (2004) identify three advantages of research effectively building strong theoretical relationships between crisis communication and those contextual factors influencing the communication. First, they argue that it is reasonable to assume that crisis communication should be affected by the context in which it is grounded, so advances in our knowledge of the context are intellectually important in understanding crisis communication. Second, theoretical connections between crisis communication and its context(s) provide valuable insights for practitioners to: (a) be better able to engage in effective crisis planning; (b) more effectively assess the potential utility of their communicative options; (c) be better prepared for crisis communication because they know what strategies are often used in what situations; and (d) build faster potential responses to crisis situations because they are simply better prepared to craft a response. Third, the authors argue that theory-based

models provide guidelines for reasoned action—more effectively avoiding 'seat-of-the-pants' thinking in understanding organizational crises.

In short, this study—as a study of the relationships between crisis context or situation and crisis communication will meet the four central criteria established by Feldman (2004) to determine whether a theoretically-focused study is valuable. Moreover, by understanding that organizations must respond to a set of crisis circumstances when engaging in crisis communication is to move toward understanding the nature of crisis communication qua communication (Hearit & Courthright, 2003).

A brief introduction of the key crisis communication and situational concepts. One of the primary strengths in the field of crisis communication, to date, has emphasized crisis response strategy. Crisis response strategy is most typically examined in terms of the individual crisis response strategies (sometimes also referred to as tactics—see Mohammed et al., 1999) used in CCMs by organizations. While *crisis response strategies* are discussed at length in chapter two, these strategies may be thought of as individual messages purposefully selected by organizational decision-makers to better enable them to communicatively manage the crisis (Hayes & Patton, 2001). This scholarship has addressed issues such as: factors affecting message evaluation (see Arpan, 2002; Elsbach & Elofson, 2000), image repair discourse, and response strategies (see Coombs & Schmidt, 2000; Greer & Moreland, 2003; Sturges, 1994; Turner, 1999). Benoit's (1997) analysis of US Air's image repair discourse, Elsbach's (1994) study of strategies used by the California cattle industry to manage legitimacy, Kauffman's (2001) study of NASA's crisis communication strategies over time, or Knight and Greenberg's

(2002) study of Nike's use of promotionalism and subpolitics as communication strategies to manage its labor critics are all examples of case studies of strategies used in particular crises.

Emerging from this body of research has been a substantial number of response strategies that organizational decision makers are likely to use when developing crisis communication messages (see Table 1). Some authors have also developed in-depth taxonomies of crisis response strategies. Two examples of these taxonomies include Mohamed et al.'s (1999) taxonomy of organization impression management tactics, categorizing crisis response strategies based on dimensions of directness, assertiveness, and defensiveness, or Benoit's (1997) foundation typology of image restoration strategies. These studies reflect strength in our understanding of individual strategies as well as an emergent assumption that crisis communication is an exercise in strategic planning (Fishman, 1999).

While the discovery and categorization of different crisis response strategies has been the most prevalent feature of crisis communication messages studied, the crisis communication literature has also made strides in suggesting factors that are likely to affect the selection of crisis communication messages. In his theoretical discussion of crisis communication Seeger (2002) argues that variance in other factors of crisis situations and communication such as: type of crisis, type of organization, communication channel, or even phase of crisis development are likely to affect the selection of individual messages, creation of crisis response strategies, and even affect the

potential success[2] of an organization's crisis communication efforts. Unfortunately in the literature there is scant examination of the effects of such situational factors on the selection of crisis communication messages. Moreover, of those situational factors, the type of organization (see Arpan, 2002; Millar, 2004) and the type of crisis (see Coombs & Holladay, 2004, Hearit & Courthright, 2003) emerge as critical situational factors that are likely to influence crisis communication messages. If scholars and practitioners were to better understand these factors that influence crisis communication messages, we would be better positioned to address the effects of such messages than we are at present.

A second area of weakness in the literature is that there is also a limited examination of a factor that might be represented in crisis communication messages. The invocation of an organization's culture is often assumed to be an inherent part of crisis communication (Pearson & Mitroff, 1993). Trice and Beyer (1993) suggest that organizational culture—like other forms of culture—is an essential part of the organizational experience because they reflect collective experience, ideologies, and is actively used in communication to reinforce shared ideologies. In the context of crisis communication this is even more critical because crisis communication is often thought of as an effort to demonstrate that an organization's norms, values, and beliefs are in line with those of its stakeholders—despite the emergence of the crisis (Massey, 2001). Specifically, Knight and Greenberg's (2002) analysis of Nike demonstrates that the corporation has been successful in managing much of the criticism of its labor practices

[2]Because the aim of developing successful accounts is to explain, rationalize, or legitimize the actions taken by an organization (Elsbach, 1994); the success of crisis communication may be thought of in terms of its effects on an organization's legitimacy.

by specifically communicating a vision of Nike's organizational culture focusing on associating the brand name with positive social values ranging from fitness to social or environmental responsibility, and even patriotism:

> Nike has been adept at using the logic of promotionalism to craft a flexible, multifaceted identity that enables the company to represent itself simultaneously as serious and 'cool', socially conscious and fashionable, earnest and ironic, image conscious and technologically sophisticated. (p. 545)

Taking the importance and potential effects on crisis communication messages of contextual factors and organizational culture the goal of this study is to further our knowledge of crisis communication messages. I will do so by first proposing a model that examines the influences of crisis type, organization type, channel of communication, characteristics of interorganizational relationships, and phases of crisis development on crisis response messages including crisis response strategy(ies) chosen by organizational decision makers and emphasizing aspects of organizational culture. Second, after proposing the model I will also propose a study to begin to test some of the relationships explicated by the model.

Ultimately this study will better identify relationships associated with the situational factors affecting crisis communication messages. Such a study is necessary, as Coombs and Holladay (1996) argue, because in the process of developing our understanding of crisis communication, we must first develop "lists" of strategies and variables, then understand how these messages are and can be used in the context of organizational crises so that organizational leaders may more effectively manage crises.

In order to accomplish my goal, this dissertation will: (a) develop a rationale for the utility and necessity of this work; (b) review the appropriate literature in order to form Research Questions and Hypotheses; (c) develop and justify the methods for data collection and analysis; (d) report the results of the data analysis; and (e) discuss the results in the context of the proposed model, implications for the research, and address areas for future research.

Developing the Rationale for Examining Crisis Communication

"Communication can be used to influence how stakeholders interpret a crisis and the organization in crisis" (Coombs & Holladay, 1996, p. 280). A study of crisis communication messages used in efforts to manage crises will meaningfully advance our knowledge of crisis communication and better inform efforts to guide organizations in crisis. The goal of studying publicly-focused crisis communication is two-fold. From a scholar's perspective, if we better understand how a crisis's critical factors (e.g., crisis type) influence crisis communication messages actually used by organizational decision-makers and spokespersons, we will later be better able to create effective predictions regarding the outcomes of crisis communication efforts as well as the ultimate outcomes of a crisis (e.g., financial impact, image, etc) (Coombs & Holladay, 2004). In an applied setting, this ability to better understand and predict the ways in which situational factors of a crisis affect crisis communication messages is an absolutely necessary step to help practitioners be better able to form strategies to help their organizations plan for and manage organizational crises.

Therefore, this study's central assumption is that a better understanding of the relationships between the situational factors of crises (e.g., crisis type, organization type, channels of communication chosen, and phases of crisis development) and elements of crisis communication messages (e.g., individual strategies used, forms of organizational culture invoked) is an important, albeit missing, component to developing our understanding of crisis communication and ultimately the effective management of organizational crises. In this section, I will argue that this is both a valid and important assumption on which to base the proposed study by: (a) discussing the need for a more systematic examination of crisis messages and (b) arguing that it is appropriate to use contemporary crisis communication messages as a benchmark for evaluating relationships between elements of crises and crisis communication messages.

The Need for Systematic and Thorough Examination of Crisis Communication

When well-managed, organizational crises can serve a number of functions for an organization, but every crisis also presents an array of risks for organizations. For example, organizational crises can lead to more effective organizational learning (Roux-Dufort, 2000), they can help point out areas of an organization's culture that have to change because it is detrimental to the organization's capabilities (Ross & Benson, 1995), and crises can point out systemic flaws in organizations' abilities (Argenti, 2002; Greer & Moreland, 2003). However, organizational crises—by their very nature—also represent a credible threat to an organization's well-being (Hayes & Patton, 2001; Pearson & Clair, 1998). For example, these threats can include conflicts between the needs of shareholders and victims of accidents (Marcus & Goodman, 1991), damage to the organization's

image (Elsbach et al., 1998), or they can even jeopardize the livelihood of an organization (King, 2002).

To manage crises, clear and specific crisis communication strategies are needed. This point has been made by practitioners (Dilenschneider & Hyde, 1985) and in the reviews of cases, like post 9/11 analyses of crisis response (Greer & Moreland, 2003). Regardless whether the research and/or recommendations are addressing crisis planning in the Third World (Sriraj & Khisty, 1999), lessons learned from industry deregulation (Basham, 2001), arguing for continual planning for crisis management in the tourism industry (Henderson, 2003), or offering an overview of the process of crisis management (Loosemore, 1999) planned response strategies are advocated.

Knight and Greenberg (2002) argue problems that organizations face and their resolution is not simply about matters of organizational practices, but also about communication. They argue that crisis response strategies are inherently important because they involve issues of sincerity and credibility that penetrate the heart of corporate identity as the principal instrument and goal of an organization's success. It is for this reason that there is a wealth of studies examining crisis communication strategies, for example the communication of compassion in crisis responses (Coombs, 1999), apologia in online crisis response strategies (Hearit, 1999), model and anti-model arguments in crisis response messages (Sellnow & Brand, 2001), or the use of crisis websites (Snellen, 2003).

Across the research and in these cases the emphasis on developing purposeful response strategies to manage critical stakeholders' evaluations of the organization, in

light of the crisis, is a hallmark of crisis management and communication research. Given that is the case, how can we reasonably expect specific response strategies to be developed, tested, and recommended when, conceptually, we have not linked critical components of message construction in our contemporary crisis communication lexicon? This is the point that both Coombs and Holloday (2004) and Hearit and Courthright (2003) make as each set of authors suggest that the present crisis communication literature has fundamentally failed to develop a theory-based connection between the context or situation associated with a crisis and the crisis communication messages used by organizations. These situational factor issues influencing message needs include such factors as crisis type, organization type, phases of crisis development, and channels of communication (Seeger, 2002). These also include variables like crisis response strategy(ies) used or appeals to the organization's cultural strengths. Herein, lays a central problem in analyzing crisis outcomes or in the current development of effective crisis communication plans. Coombs and Holloday (2004) point out that each of these issues or variables have been discussed in the literature, but never discussed in a coherent and exhaustive manner together:

> Three points must be addressed to understand how to match crisis response strategies (Feldman, 2004); identification of crisis response strategies; identification of crisis types; and creation of a link between the crisis response strategies and the types….The first two points have been addressed. Unfortunately, there has been limited progress in linking crisis response strategies and crisis types (p. 95).

Therefore, there is excellence in elements of our knowledge of crisis communication, but it also suffers from a lack of connection among the critical variables that might influence the messages and enable us to more accurately predict potential outcomes of crisis response strategies. Identifying relationships between these critical variables is absolutely necessary in order to properly advance our knowledge and theory-building regarding crisis communication.

A Rationale for Studying Current Crisis Communication Messages

While identifying the limitations in the present study of crisis communication messages is an important reason to justify the proposed study, the choice of the messages to analyze is equally important. Because such extensive work has been conducted regarding crisis communication and because Americans' understanding of crises has been irreversibly shaped by the experience of 9/11, an examination of contemporary crisis communication messages will offer the most fruitful development of our knowledge of the relationships among the variables.

There are, however, several other benefits to conducting a deep analysis of crisis communication messages presently being used to better predict factors affecting them. Initially, using such messages recognizes that executives and organizations have benefited from past crises and crisis experiences. While there remains a substantial percentage of executives[3] and organizations still without crisis plans and strategies, more and more organizations are learning and have learned that preparedness for crises is essential. In fact, one of the critical lessons many organizations learned from September

[3] Based on Gonzales-Herrero and Pratt's (1996) discussion of the prevalence of crises and executives perceptions of their own preparedness discussed in the Introduction to this chapter.

11 is that having crisis management and communication plans in place is absolutely essential (Argenti, 2002). Additionally, we have had a generation of executives and crisis planners since Tylenol's arsenic case demonstrated how a quick and decisive corporate plan can minimize the negative outcomes of a crisis. This suggests that an examination of contemporary crisis communication messages would be the most valid way to investigate the factors that affect crisis communication messages. In fact, one example of such a study was conducted by Perry et al. (2003) focusing on the use of the Internet as a consistent channel of crisis communication. They found that regardless of organization or crisis type, organizations are consistently using the Internet to manage crisis communication. Therefore, it is both timely and worthwhile to develop a deeper understanding of relationships among the variables influencing crisis communication.

Drawing upon our knowledge strengths. Additionally, the proposed study uses the field's strong understanding of crisis response strategies and other variables influencing crisis communication while developing new and important knowledge regarding the relationships between those variables. While these variables will be discussed in depth in the literature review, our contemporary knowledge of crisis communication really represents a detailed photograph of crisis communication. Unfortunately, because the critical variables have not been effectively analyzed together, the challenges by previous authors to explicate the relationships between crisis communication and features of the crisis have gone largely unmet (Coombs & Holladay, 2004; 1996). In short because this study moves away from a piecemeal treatment of crisis communication towards the

development of a more meaningful heuristic, it affords communication researchers and practitioners better opportunities to build models and applications of those models.

Therefore, my central focus for this study is to analyze contemporary crisis communication messages which are both relevant and useful in order to examine the factors affecting message construction along with variations in the message content itself. In the next chapter, I will develop the model driving the proposed study and review the body of previous research to discuss the situational factors, message features, and outcomes associated with crisis communication.

Chapter 2

Literature Review: Beginning to Assemble Puzzle Pieces

Introduction

In the first chapter I argue that the field's knowledge of crisis communication is much like a well-focused and highly detailed photograph; however, it is a photograph that resembles a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece is valuable, yet without assembly and exploration the picture is difficult to discern. There is both breadth and depth to our understanding of crisis communication; unfortunately, there has been insufficient attention paid to a more holistic analysis of the strategies, message components, and factors that influence crisis communication messages communicated by organizations to their stakeholders. In short, there has been insufficient development of models of strategic crisis communication. As such, our ability to evaluate crisis communication efforts, crisis outcomes, and more effectively build crisis communication messages is limited. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter—and more broadly of this study—is to begin to build a new model that emphasizes the relationships between crisis communication response strategies, situational factors affecting those strategies, and potential crisis outcomes. Once the model is developed, this chapter will propose a study that focuses on the first four variables to be tested by exploring the relationships between crisis response strategies and two critical situational factors that are likely to affect the use of those strategies by organizations in crisis and the invocation of organizational culture in crisis response messages.

Building the Strategic Model of Organizational Crisis Communication

In the first chapter, I argued that if communication scholars and crisis managers in the field are to better understand the role that communication can and does play in

organizational crises, then we ought not treat the study of crisis communication in a piecemeal fashion. Even Coombs and Holladay's (1999, 2002) work in developing the Situational Crisis Communication Theory still only focuses very closely on the relationships between crisis variables (i.e., crisis responsibility, severity, and performance history) and crisis communication strategies. There are, however, other important components necessary to build a strong understanding of the role of crisis communication in organizational crises. Therefore, this chapter's first task will be to identify and briefly discuss the critical components to a Strategic Model of Organizational Crisis Communication (SMOCC). In doing so, I propose the theory (see Figure 1) with three components: situational factors; message features; and outcomes.

SMOCCs Organizational and Situational Factors

"Organizations do not exist in a vacuum…." (Trice & Beyer, 1993, p. 299). This statement underscores the point that context, situation, and environment are critical components for organizations coping with day-to-day business, let alone crises. Sutcliffe (2001) argues that organizational environments are socially constructed. This suggests that environments are dynamic, not dependable, nor particularly stable because they are changed by what organizations do and how people perceive their environment (Trice & Beyer, 1993; Sutcliffe, 2001).

Negotiation of the environment, the variance in situations, and potential for both similarity and difference in crisis experience is at the heart of Seeger's (2002) argument that a thorough understanding of the features affecting a crisis situation can help us better understand organizational crises, communication, and outcomes. Moreover, in their

discussion of organizational crisis responses, Coombs and Holladay (2002) advocate Situational Crisis Communication Theory as a way to articulate the variables, assumptions, and relationships they believe ought to be considered in selecting crisis response strategies. In their study focusing on relationships between crisis response and organizational reputation, they argue that a situational response is necessary to understand the different ways in which organizations might have to face different crises:

> Needed is a situational approach to selecting crisis response strategies, that is, what an organization says and does after a crisis to protect the organization's reputation…He (Boyd, 2000) challenged scholars to understand how the crisis type (or situation) influenced the selection of crisis response strategies. To meet this challenge, scholars must identify the range of possible crisis types and crisis responses, and explain how crisis types affect the selection of crisis responses (p. 166).

Additionally, Sellnow and Seeger (2001) argue that because crises are threatening, often destructive, and sometimes devastating, understanding factors that influence crisis communication is critical. In particular they point out that understanding messages and their construction is of particular importance to this endeavor in order that our crisis communication is able to be more sophisticated and flexible. At its heart, this task is what this section, chapter, and project is trying to contribute—the development of a more sophisticated and flexible way of understanding crisis communication messages. In order to help accomplish this task, this section will develop three situational factors likely to influence the use of crisis response strategies.

Organization Type

While type of organization has not been previously included as a variable for studying crisis communication messages, a number of authors suggest that "niches" or "sector" are likely to influence an organization's reaction to crises (e.g., Arpan, 2002; Glynn, 2000; Massey, 2001; Millar, 2004). For example, in a study of a crisis in a heritage organization, Hayes and Patton (2001) found that organizations that depend on public support are uniquely affected by organizational crises because there is a public presupposition of reputation. Consequently, public support can be fickle if they reputation is damaged. At a broader level, Ginzel, Kramer, and Sutton (1993) point out that what an organization does, its identity, and organizational routines that place role constraints on members are important factors in determining what type of an organizational response emerges during a crisis and even the degree to which those responses may be effective. Massey (2001) emphasizes that part of an organization's identity is its niche which will necessarily affect the organization's reaction to crises. Similarly, Glynn (2000) argues that different types of industries have different identities; therefore, affecting organizational needs that emerge in times of crisis.

These studies emphasize that it is more than just a case of 'different organizations and identities', rather they build a case for examining industries as the critical operationalization of organization type. Groupings by industry demonstrate a similarity in function and overall organizational needs (Glynn, 2000) and therefore, make a strong operationalization of organization type. Table 2 represents a list of the 20 industries represented in the United States in 2002. This list and the examples were taken from the

2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), a part of the US Census Bureau (Bureau, 2002).

An additional way in which it might be useful to consider organization type is by thinking of 'type' as also being representative of whether an industry has a history of managing crises. In a study of a decade of major crises emerging—and using the NAICS to categorize the findings—Millar (2004) found that the following industries were most crisis prone: (1) Finance and Insurance, with banking, stocks and bond brokerages, and insurance companies most crisis prone; (2) Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services with aerospace and pharmaceuticals most crisis prone; (3) Information with telecommunications and computer software most crisis prone; (4) Transportation and Warehousing with air transportation most crisis prone; (5) manufacturing with motor vehicle manufacturing most crisis prone; and (6) Mining with oil and gas extraction operators most crisis prone. Consequently, at any given time, we would expect more crises identified for those six industries than the remaining 14. Further, findings using an organization's crisis history as a central variable for determining outcomes associated with crisis communication of a current crisis (Coombs & Holladay, 2004) indicate that an additional conceptualization of organization type as being in a crisis prone or non-crisis prone industry would be valid. Additionally, based on the previous analysis suggesting that organizational type and particular industry are likely to influence organizational reactions to crises as well as propensity for crisis occurrence, organizations experiencing crises in crisis prone industries are likely to respond to crises differently than those experiencing crises in non-crisis prone industries.

Crisis Type

Pearson and Mitroff (1993) point out that for the first time in human history, human-induced crises have the potential to rival natural disasters both in terms of scope and magnitude; therefore, they claim that recognizing different crisis types afford organizations and stakeholders better opportunities to attribute blame and take action. This point also suggests that while the scope and magnitude of crises can be great, not all crises are likely to rival the floods of 1993 in terms of devastation. Accordingly, it is critical to recognize that different crisis types not only exist, but are likely to merit different types of crisis response strategies. Several authors (e.g., Coombs & Holladay, 1996; Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Hearit, 1999; Pearson & Mitroff, 1993) argue that the context for a crisis is of vital importance in determining appropriate organizational responses. Specifically Coombs and Holladay (2002) argue: "Identifying the crisis type enables an initial assessment of the amount of crisis responsibility that publics will attribute to a crisis situation" (p. 169).

Table 3 identifies a typology of crises that organizations are likely to face, based on those identified across the crisis communication literature and drawing heavily from a typology that Coombs and Holladay (2002) created. However, what distinguishes this typology from others is a more explicit classification of crises into crisis categories. Three crisis categories and 18 types of crises emerge. The first category is organizational transgressions. These represent those crises for which blame is attributable to the organization itself—whether the actions were intentional or unintentional (see, e.g., Hearit, 1999). Included in this category are crises centering on: illegal corporate

behavior, technical breakdown accidents, technical breakdown product recalls, megadamage incidents, human breakdown accidents, and human breakdown recalls. The second category is organizational events, representing incidents that may or may not be within the organization's locus of control and may or may not have significant negative effects on the organization, but that are still crises. Included in this category are crises centering on: mergers and failed mergers; strikes; economic downturns resulting in actions like downsizing; and workplace violence. The third category includes those events or actions that are outside of an organization's locus of control; however, are still crises with which an organization has to deal. Included in this category are crises centering on: rumors about the organization; product tampering by external agents; challenges or pressure group activism; shifting political attitudes that harm the organization; natural disasters; and acts of terrorism.

Coombs and Holladay (2002) also argue that using typologies of crisis communications along with crisis types is necessary, yet typically lacking in current crisis communication research. They argue that a lack of integration of message and crisis type prevents managers from effectively understanding the crisis communication necessary for any particular situation.

Crisis Phase

In their work, Gonzales-Herrero and Pratt (1996) emphasize that it is not enough to examine critical situational factors like I have already discussed—organization and crisis type. They argue it is also important to examine crisis lifecycles because in different stages of a crisis different communicative needs and strategies are likely to

emerge. Further, Massey (2001) argues that research on crisis communication should be a longitudinal endeavor because crises are not static events also suggesting that communicative needs and strategies are likely to change over the course of a crisis. There are three phases to an organizational crisis: events prior to the crisis, during the crisis, and after the crisis.

Gonzales-Herrero and Pratt (1996) argue that crisis communication efforts before a crisis actually erupts are characterized by proactive strategies and measures. Specifically, during this phase they argue that issue management and planning prevention occur for those organizations engaging in crisis communication prior to a crisis's emergence. Issue management involves scanning the organization's environment to identify troublesome issues *before* the organization is obligated to deal with it—as such, crisis communication can be used to avoid crises from erupting (though they cannot avoid crises) (Elsbach et al., 1998; Gonzales-Herrero & Pratt, 1996). Therefore communicative efforts prior to a crisis are likely to redirect stakeholders' attention from an issue or communicate positive messages about the organization. A study of anticipatory crisis management associated with hospital billing found that impression management before a crisis can distract stakeholders from complaining as well as change their information processing habits regarding the issue (Elsbach et al., 1998). Additionally, Heath and Millar (2004) argue that there are two functions that pre-crisis communication serves: "looking for and reducing the likelihood that a crisis will occur; and communicating with key markets, audiences, and publics to prepare them for a crisis so that it can be framed and addressed when it occurs." (p. 6)

Gonzales-Herrero and Pratt (1996) argue that at the second phase, the crisis has already occurred and the communicative efforts at this point are designed to handle the media, develop crisis materials (i.e., position statements, frequently asked question responses, preempt negative publicity, communicate with stakeholders). They argue that communication during the crisis targets messages to particular audiences, obtains third party support, implements internal communications, and tries to control rumor mongering. This suggests that the options and possible communicative choices during the crisis are almost limitless (Heath & Millar, 2004).

During the post-crisis phase, Gonzales-Herrero and Pratt (1996) argue that organizations must: (a) pay attention to stakeholders and their continued involvement with the crisis; (b) monitor issues; (c) inform media of organizational actions; (d) evaluate crisis plans; (e) incorporate feedback into the crisis plan; and (f) develop a long-term communication program to lessen any damages to the organization's reputation caused by the crisis. Essentially, "…postcrisis, a vital part of the process, entails providing information that demonstrates how, why, and when the organization has put things right as well as what it plans to do to prevent the recurrence of a similar crisis." (Heath & Millar, 2004, p. 8). Based on this analysis and the organization's needs after a crisis, we should see strategies emphasizing a positive message about the organization and the crisis's resolution.

SMOCCs Message Features

In Argenti's (2002) discussion of crisis communication after 9/11, he makes the point messages and their audiences are inextricably linked by arguing that in order for

crisis response strategies to be effective, the information has to be received by appropriate audiences and received in intended ways. In crisis communication, this point is particularly salient as Arpan (2002) notes that crisis responses or accounts are delivered to specific audiences for specific purposes in order to influence the potential outcomes of the crisis such as: economic implications (e.g., stock prices or losses in sales/ profits), increased scrutiny by the media or government regulatory agencies, or image/ legitimacy implications. Additionally, in the study of crisis communication, considerable attention has been given to cataloguing the types of messages that are delivered over the life of an organizational crisis. In developing this depth and breadth of knowledge, previous authors (e.g., Benoit, 1997; Mohamed, Gardner, & Paolillo, 1999; Sellnow & Ulmer, 1995) have identified that the crisis communication messages are typically organized in terms of crisis response strategies. Crisis response strategies (CRS) are those individual messages purposefully selected by organizational decision makers to better enable them to communicatively manage a crisis (Hayes & Patton, 2001). Finally, Marra (1998) makes the point that the invocation and use of an organization's culture is an inherent part of the crisis communication process. Therefore, the above suggests that in building a strategic model of crisis communication, there are three critical features of crisis messages—crisis response strategies, the invocation of an organization's culture in crisis response messages, and the audience receiving the messages.

Crisis Response Strategies

As previously discussed in Chapter 1, crisis communication involves messages between the organization and stakeholders prior to, during, or after an organizational

crisis (King, 2002). These messages can certainly include a host of channels and forms, but what defines them as CRS is that they are explicitly linked to a specific crisis or set of crisis issues. Until now, the research has been building an understanding of individual components of these messages and has not yet examined the ways in which these components work together to build an organization's total crisis communication effort.

Benoit's (1997) work is widely regarded as one of the first and best discussions of message strategies. In his Theory of Image Repair Discourse, Benoit developed a typology of Image Restoration Strategies that included denial, evasion of responsibility, reduction of offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification. That work was also extended in 1997 with Czerwinski in an analysis of US Air's image repair discourse subdividing many of his categories in the typology (see Benoit & Czerwinski, 1997). The Mohamed et al. (1999) taxonomy of organizational impression management tactics is a thorough review of CCM strategies. Building on Benoit's (1997) and Benoit and Czerwinski's (1997) work, Mohamed et al. (1999) created their taxonomy based on directness and assertiveness. It included: direct and assertive tactics; indirect and assertive tactics; indirect and defensive tactics; as well as direct and defensive tactics.

These three works combine to make an effective basis for defining crisis response strategies; therefore, drawing from these as well as other research and typologies of crisis message strategies Table 1 outlines the taxonomy of crisis response strategies that organizations facing crises may use in their CRS, each strategy's definition, along with key authors. This taxonomy includes eight categories of strategies and 45 individual strategies that organizations may choose to include in their CRS. Aside from the creation

of an updated taxonomy on CRS, one of the contributions that the proposed research can make is in terms of being among the first pieces of research to compare the concurrent use of crisis response strategies in a comprehensive model of factors. The groundwork and value of such research has been laid with comparisons of crisis response strategies used in single crises with single organizations; such as Kauffman's (2001) analysis of strategies used by NASA during the 1970 explosion aboard the Apollo 13 or Sellnow and Ulmer's (1995) analysis of message ambiguity in the Jack in the Box *E. Coli* crisis. However, it would be an important step forward in our understanding of CCMs to examine crisis response strategies used across different situational variables.

Crisis response strategies focusing on self-enhancement. CRS focusing on self-enhancement include marketing and image advertising strategies. These two crisis response strategies emphasize quality, information to make the organization look favorable, and frame issues for stakeholders (e.g., Heath, 1994; Proto & Supino, 1999). While these strategies are not exclusive to crisis situations, such strategies have been included in the study of crisis communication. For example, Heath (1998) argues that one of the necessary elements of managing a crisis is improving communication with all groups through better image management and marketing. Additionally, Proto and Supino (1999) argue that in industries whose processes could threaten the environment in some way, it is critical for those organizations to engage in image and marketing activities to increase the perception of transparency in the relationship between the company and relevant groups.

Crisis response strategies focusing on routine communication. Crisis response strategies sometimes focus on routine communication. Such types include the Communication of Mission/ Vision, Annual Reports, and Newsletters. These crisis response strategies emphasize communication about the organization, who it is, and what it does (e.g., Fiol, 1995; Heath, 1994; Proto & Supino, 1999). Like the self-enhancement strategies, routine communication is not exclusive to CRS; however, the occurrence of an organizational crisis would also suggest that these routine communications would be likely to report the crisis, its affects, and address stakeholder concerns about the organization's viability during and after the crisis.

Crisis response strategies that frame the crisis. An organization might also choose to explain the crisis, their role in it, how important it is, and what they are doing about it by using one of the crisis response strategies that framing the crisis (e.g., Bennett, 1998; Kauffman, 2001; Williams & Olaniran, 1998). These strategies include: Accounts, Information Dissemination, Issue Salience, and Preconditioning.

Crisis response strategies that frame the organization. In addition to trying to define the crisis for their stakeholders, organizations may also choose to incorporate crisis response strategies that frame the organization. In this way, they are making claims about the character of the organization as a way to minimize potential negative effects of the crisis (e.g., Coombs & Schmidt, 2000; Marra, 1998; Sellnow & Brand, 2001). These strategies include: Ingratiation, Organizational Promotion, Issue Management, Supplication, Organizational Handicapping, and Bolstering.

Crisis response strategies that are anti-social or defensive. Much research attention has been devoted to crisis response strategies that emphasize an organization's defensive or even negative reactions to organizational crises (e.g., Benoit & Czerwinski, 1997; Mohamed et al., 1999; Ulmer & Sellnow, 2000). As such nine such strategies have emerged from the research that typify an organization's communicative effort being to cover themselves or refusals to admit culpability for a crisis. These include the following strategies: Noncompliance, Disclaimers, Defensive Compliance, Evasion of Responsibility, Shifting the Blame, Simple Denial, Strategic Ambiguity, Minimization, and Transcendence.

Accommodative strategies. On the opposite side of the coin to the anti-social or defensive strategies are the accommodative crisis response strategies, in which the organization communicates an emphasis on compliance, helpfulness, contrition, openness, and sympathy. Accordingly, accommodative strategies are typified by an organization admitting fault and/or emphasizing coping or sympathy (e.g., Benoit, 1997; Henderson, 2003; Martinelli & Briggs, 1998). These strategies include the following: Corrective Action/Compensation, Apologia, Compassion, Offering Reassurances, Eliciting Sympathy, Transparency, and Volunteering.

Excellence or renewal strategies. The hallmark of these crisis response strategies is a communicated emphasis on moving forward—beyond a crisis (e.g., Henriques & Sadorsky, 1999; Milliman et al., 1994; Williams & Olaniran, 1998). These could certainly be communicative efforts that occur during a crisis, but also after as well. These strategies include the following: Dialogic, Exemplification, and Pro-social Behavior.

Emphasizing interorganizational relationships strategies. The final nine strategies can be grouped as those crisis response strategies that emphasize some dimension of interorganizational relationships. These strategies range from those that hide connections to other organizations in the midst of crises, to those that highlight either positive or negative links to other organizations, to those that emphasize cooperation and each organization's legitimacy in the relationship (e.g., Martinelli & Briggs, 1998; Mohamed et al., 1999; Sellnow & Brand, 2001). These strategies include: Blaring Others, Blasting, Burying, Blurring, Belittling, Boosting, Boasting, Burnishing, and Collaboration.

Organizational Culture

> Trice and Beyer (1993) explain that organizations:
>
> …arrive at their shared ideologies through collective experience and repeated social interactions over time. They use cultural forms to communicate and reinforce these shared ideologies. Organizational cultures, like other cultures, develop as groups of people struggle together to make sense of and cope with their worlds. (p. 4)

In this definition of organizational culture, Trice and Beyer (1993) emphasize that culture is a compilation of an organization's ideologies, which are hard to measure in typical research language, but that those ideologies are made concrete in the forms. This supports Marra's (1998) analysis that organizational culture and crisis communication are inextricably linked from the decisions about what to communicate to the content of messages that are communicated. Closer examination of the four forms of organizational culture, proposed by Trice and Beyer, demonstrates both the close relationship of culture

and communication and why it is a critical message feature when examining crisis response strategies. Table 5 identifies examples of the forms of organizational culture developed by Trice and Beyer (1993).

Symbols. The first form is symbols, which includes the tangible representations of abstract values, like objects, settings, or performers (Trice & Beyer, 1993). Cheney and Christensen (2001) argue that the world becomes "real" through symbols that organizations and social actors employ because they help to manage issues, image, and organizational identity. Thus a symbolic view of culture emphasizes two points: (a) culture and communication are inextricably intertwined and (b) culture is a public phenomenon (Phillips & Brown, 1993). The relationship between crisis communication and symbols has been strongly made, particularly in Coombs and Holladay's work (1996, 2001). In their 1996 work, Coombs and Holladay argue that crises themselves can come to symbolize the organization and reflect on the values of the organization but that crisis responses may be able to shape the ways in which the symbols are both constructed an interpreted by critical stakeholders. In their 2001 work, the authors examined crisis history as a critical component and part of the symbolic management of organizations, finding that this history shapes how stakeholders view both the crisis and the organization. Further, in a study of conflict in a symphony orchestra, Glynn (2000) found that identity and symbolism was a critical component of conflict and ultimately crisis in the organization as the organization was not able to effectively manage multiple identities. Taken together, this suggests that symbolism is likely to be invoked in crisis communication messages.

Language. Language is the second form that emphasizes the ways in which individuals interact and includes jargon, slang, humor, gossip, metaphors, proverbs, or slogans (Trice & Beyer, 1993). They claim that each organization or negotiated culture has its own language. We see proverbs and slogans often used in the management of an organization's image or legitimacy. One important example of how language both helps to manage and potentially even contribute to organizational crises is Nike. In their analysis Knight and Greenberg (2002), argue that Nike has successfully created their identity using slogans and other types of promotional communication, "that enables the company to represent itself simultaneously as serious and 'cool,' socially conscious and fashionable, earnest and ironic, and image conscious and technologically sophisticated" (p. 545). However, this same incorporation of elements of language have also fueled pressure groups' arguments that they abuse their overseas laborers and are not socially responsible through the use of counterbranding[4] and subpolitics[5].

Narratives. Third, Trice and Beyer (1993) claim that narratives are a cultural form because stories or texts convey messages about the organization and organizational life.

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[4] Knight and Greenberg (2002) argue that when counterbranding occurs it is about communicating an interest in the well-being of others and uses a politics of identification. In the case of Nike, "Antisweatshop activism involves a desire to empathize with and care about the situation, interests, and aspirations of those at a distance while assuming a critical stance toward something that is culturally and geographically more proximate, that is, the corporation." (p. 554).

[5] Knight and Greenberg (2002) define subpolitics as: "Subpolitics refers to the politicization of situations, practices, and processes that comes from below the formal political system (from non-elites) and from outside it. It operates at both a more localized and globalized level than official politics and its institutional supports (parliamentarism
and political parties). Subpolitics is the politics of interest groups, social movements, activism, and advocacy groups whose interests radiate out beyond the sphere of institutional politics and whose targets include power centers other than the State. Subpolitics emanates from and refers to the interstices of social life where power relations register their effects."(p. 554)

Like language, narratives can be used strategically. Strategically told stories relate the organization to the stakeholders in an attempt to legitimate an organization's position and enhance its image to pacify dissatisfied groups, garner support, or lessen opposition or conflict (Phillips & Brown, 1993). In crisis response strategies, narratives are closely linked with the organization's efforts to build accounts of the situation. In Kauffman's (2001) analysis of the crisis communication response of NASA to the April, 1970 explosion aboard the Apollo 13, he demonstrates how the invocation of a cultural narrative can be a critical component of CCMs. The narrative used invoked a frontier theme that had previously been successful in characterizing NASA's space program and framed the event, not as a failure but a success. The narrative had four elements: (a) it portrayed the astronauts as rugged, independent pioneers; (b) travel in space for these pioneers was rugged in a hostile environment; (c) they had to overcome a malevolent antagonist in order to succeed; and (d) that there was a specific geographic location capable of being conquered by these pioneers. This particular example demonstrates how a narrative is certainly a symbolic creation, and can include multiple strategies—in this case account and preconditioning.

Practices. The final form Trice and Beyer (1993) outline are practices, defined as rituals, routines, taboos, rites, or ceremonies, but emphasize that "Behaviors become cultural forms when their efficacy is taken for granted and their appropriateness is rarely questioned." (p. 107). Jablin and Sias (2001) emphasize the importance of routines in their description of them as organizational-level knowledge that are able to create and re-create meanings based in the relationships between individuals, groups, and

organizations. Because organizational crises often involve an organization's practices and can result in the organization's culture changing to address the crisis issues (Ross & Benson, 1995), communication about practices is likely to be an important feature of crisis response strategies.

Though organizational culture has infrequently been considered as a specific element of crisis communication (see Marra, 1998; Ross & Benson, 1995 as exceptions to the rule) this discussion demonstrates that it is a critical component of crisis communication messages.

Audience

The audience is an important component to understanding crisis message outcomes and is linked to crisis messages because the message's success relies on an appropriate message being delivered to and received by intended audiences (Argenti, 2002; Hayes & Patton, 2001). As such it is an important element of the message component in the Strategic Model of Crisis Communication. Traditionally, the 'audience' is more precisely defined as groups of stakeholders. Stakeholders are those groups and/ or individuals who can affect or be affected by a focal organization (Freeman, 1994). These groups form because of an awareness that the focal organization's activities are relevant to and perhaps changeable by the group (Connolly, Conlon, & Deutsch, 1980). In identifying stakeholder groups, much of the work in stakeholder theory (i.e., Connolly et al., 1980; Frooman, 1999; Henriques & Sadorsky, 1999; Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997; Rowley, 1997) incorporate the dimensions of interorganizational relationships such as: (a) relational valence or the emotional affect an organization feels towards a stakeholder

group (Atkins & Lowe, 1994); (b) a history of interaction with stakeholders that affords organizations the ability to build structures and rituals of interaction (Harris, 1994; Jennings, Artz, Gillin, & Christodouloy, 2000; Scott & Lane, 2000; Trice & Beyer, 1993); (c) a stakeholder group's legitimacy—or the recognizeability, reputation, or expertise (Haley, 1996; Suchman, 1995); (d) the power that a stakeholder has to influence the organization (Heath, 1994; Mitchell et al., 1997); and (e) the urgency or extent to which a stakeholder's interest or influence is time sensitive and critical to the organization (Connolly et al., 1980; Mitchell et al., 1997; Scott & Lane, 2000).

Based on the combination of the elements discussed (i.e., relational valence, history, legitimacy, power, and urgency), four stakeholder groups emerge: strategic stakeholders; moral stakeholders; desirable stakeholders; and dangerous stakeholders. These four groups are defined based on a focal organization's perspective. Thus, in a web of relationships, identification and placement of stakeholder groups is dependent on the organization's perspective and the negotiation of that perspective over time.

Strategic stakeholders. Strategic stakeholders are groups denoted in that they have a relational history, are powerful, the relational quality can be either adversarial or cooperative, and are considered legitimate. Strategic stakeholders demand an organization's attention because they can directly affect the organization (Frooman, 1999) and the relationship is likely to be highly interdependent (Clarkson, 1995; Scott & Lane, 2000). An example of a strategic stakeholder relationship is found in a joint venture, where two or more organizations pool their resources to create a separately owned organization with the potential for a broad range of objectives (Barringer &

Harrison, 2000). Such a joint venture was created with SEMATECH in the computer semi-conductor industry (Browning, Beyer, & Shetler, 1995). However, these relationships are not limited to joint ventures, the U.S. wine industry's collaboration to improve their market share is also an example of a strategic set of stakeholders (Brown & Butler, 1995).

Moral stakeholders. Moral stakeholders are denoted in that they are unlikely to have a distinctive relationship history, are not powerful, can have either an adversarial or cooperative relational quality, but an organization does not view their claims as legitimate. Thus, these stakeholders are not explicitly recognized and obligations to them might only be of an ethical or moral nature—something broadly defined under the auspices of 'public interest' (Bendheim, Waddock, & Graves, 1998; Maitland, 1994; Nicholson & Robertson, 1996; Scott & Lane, 2000). Moral stakeholders relationships and their implications are typically less obvious and not clearly defined (Massey, 2001). Finally, moral stakeholders are likely to be those influenced by or affected by an organization's actions, but lack decisive influence on that organization (Clarkson, 1995).

Desirable stakeholders. Desirable stakeholders refers to those with legitimate claims, but do not necessarily have a relational history with an organization, lack power, and are perceived as having a positive relational valence. Thus in a "perfect" world, an organization would like to facilitate these stakeholders' claims, so reactions to them are either by choice or ability (i.e., extra resources) (Henriques & Sadorsky, 1999). The relationship itself between an organization and its desirable stakeholders may be largely symbolic and may be maintained for the purposes of image or the organization's

legitimacy with its other stakeholders (Heath, 1994; Massey, 2001). However this is not a trivial relationship, as desirable stakeholders often include social and political stakeholders facilitating the maintenance of public affairs facilitating both the organization's legitimacy and survival (Meznar & Nigh, 1993).

Dangerous stakeholders. Dangerous stakeholders may have a relational history, are powerful, are not considered legitimate, and are only considered adversarial. This category represents those stakeholders that an organization "fears" and either seeks to avoid contact with or manage the damage they could do. Thus, the emphasis in the power relationship is likely to be on these stakeholders' coercive influence. Further, the barrier for an organization to be able to seek a strategic alliance with these stakeholders might lie in fundamental ideological incompatibility (Meyerson, 1994). Additionally, the organization's perception that these stakeholders can exercise influence is critical, so that threats of withholding resources or even attaching strings to resources are likely to be taken as credible, but are also predictive of the dangerous stakeholder relationship (Frooman, 1999). Milliman et al.'s (1994) finding that the relationships between some environmental groups and businesses were only adversarial and cooperation was unlikely demonstrates the propensity for such stakeholder relationships to exist. Essentially, dangerous stakeholders would be considered the "enemy."

Channels of Crisis Communication

One of the central assumptions that crisis communication research makes is that organizations essentially *have* to communicate to relevant stakeholder groups when they face crises. Thus, the channels that are employed by an organization in crisis is likely to

be a critical component of the message design. In fact, one of the arguments I make in Chapter 1 is that organizational crises are inherently communicative phenomena (King, 2002). A part of the reason that organizations communicate with their stakeholders is that they are more effectively able to avoid rumors and the dissemination of misinformation if they are providing a source of information about the crisis and the organization (Snellen, 2003).

There are eleven different channels identified in the crisis communication literature and six of those are public channels and five are private channels of organizational crisis communication (see Table 4). The study of crisis communication has traditionally focused on those messages delivered to public audiences; therefore, to appropriately apply that literature and develop and apply the message strategies, communication of IORs, and inclusion of organizational culture in CCMs to each of the factors—including channels—this study will also focus on the six public channels of crisis communication. They include: the mass media, advertising, Internet, editorial boards, organizational activism, and third party channels. Argenti (2002) emphasizes that the selection of the appropriate channel for crisis response strategies is important to ensure that information and messages have the opportunity to be received by appropriate audiences and are received in intended ways.

The mass media and Internet are the two channels that have received the most attention in academic scholarship on crisis communication. After 9/11 studies of the Internet as a channel of crisis communication erupted in the literature. While technology and its use in organizational crises is important as an independent examination, Moore

(2004) argues that its emergence makes us more carefully examine how information is crafted and used in engaging our changing environments:

> Technology is fusing information with action—a convergence filled with implications for executives and officials confronted by an unexpected disaster or charged with identifying and planning for potential crises. The costs of failing to understand will be far more dramatic than in the past. (p. 29)

More specifically Moore (2004) argues that the Internet and mediated forms of crisis communication represent a collaborative platform to manage both crises and their surrounding issues. Analysts argue that the Internet and other mediated forms of crisis communication are effective channels during crises because: (a) they are widely available; (b) they are easily updated, enabling timely responses; (c) the content is flexible so that the organization can communicate compassion to victims while helping the organization to communicate to the public as well as the media; and (d) they are inexpensive to maintain (Greer & Moreland, 2003). Snellen (2003) points out these are desirable types of features because stakeholder groups who are interested in the issue and the crisis are likely to be seeking information. If an organization in crisis fails to make information available, stakeholders will look elsewhere—enabling rumors and misinformation to be more readily spread.

Ultimately, this use of the Internet as a channel of crisis communication cuts across both organization and crisis type, as a majority of organizations have turned to the Internet to communicate with stakeholders during a crisis (Perry et al., 2003). According to Perry et al.,'s (2003) findings, during crises all financial organizations used the

Internet; 79 percent of new technology organizations, 71 percent of consumer product organizations, and 57 percent of government-related organizations integrated the Internet into their crisis communications.

However, the same study also found that while the use of the Internet is increasing as a channel for crisis messages, organizations continued to prefer traditional methods of crisis communication. Part of this reason is because during disasters or very large organizational crises, organizations use the mass media to communicate with their stakeholders, suggesting that the media can be a target audience as well as a channel of communication that can enhance the credibility of an organization's crisis response strategy (Argenti, 2002; Benoit and Czerwinski, 1997; Henderson 2003). With relationship to 9/11, Argenti (2002) demonstrates this point:

> Normally, of course, the news media and corporate America have what may be best described as an adversarial relationship—one that communications officers are asked to 'manage.' However, as the events of 9/11 unfolded, many of them realized that they needed to start thinking of the media as allies—in part because their failed communications systems left them no other choice. (p. 105)

These findings suggest that there is a strong link between channel of communication and the intended audiences for the communication.

Taken together, crisis response strategy, organizational culture, and audience constitute the second component of the Strategic Model of Crisis Communication. The model is laid in a linear progression from right to left because a central assumption of the

model is that each component of the model is built on the one before. Therefore, the situational factors of the model necessarily influence the message features of the model.

SMOCCs Outcomes Identification

The final component of the Strategic Model of Crisis Communication identifies the critical outcomes from the communicative elements to managing an organizational crisis. Like the message features before it, the outcomes are likely to be influenced by both the situational factors and the message features of the crisis. Specifically, authors like Ulmer (2001), emphasize the role of communication in organizational crises—regardless of whether the outcomes are ultimately positive or negative for the organization. The outcomes of organizational crises and their management can range from issues associated with basic organizational survival (Stacks, 2004) to organizational learning where changes in routines and practices are made because of the crises (Roux-Dufort, 2000); however, most assessments of crisis outcomes can be grouped into four categories: economic; image or legitimacy; organizational scrutiny; and interorganizational relationships.

Economic Outcomes

Despite whether the crisis was a result of acts of terrorism or illegal corporate activities, organizational crises can dramatically affect an organization's economic outlook. In their analysis of renewal strategies by companies after 9/11, Ulmer and Sellnow (2002) pointed out that as a result of the terrorist attacks that tens of thousands of employees were laid off in the airline industry, in travel agencies, hotels, catering services, and even the United States Postal System. In their study of crisis response in the

tourism industry, Gonzales-Herrero and Pratt's (1998) critical outcome emphasized the relationship between the viability of tourism in a region following crises and consumer perceptions of risk. When those risks are too great, such as in the case after 9/11, all industries linked with the crisis are likely to be financially affected. These financial effects can also have significant long-term consequences, particularly in the case of illegal corporate behavior. For example, in a study of the long-term negative financial impacts of illegal corporate behavior in the accounting industry, Baucus and Baucus (1997) found that firms experiencing such crises had diminished returns over five years and slower sales growths at the three and five year markers after convictions.

Any sector may be financially affected by crises and the effectiveness of their management; Hayes and Patton (2001) found that when crises in the nonprofit sector were not managed effectively, the public financial support of those institutions was critically threatened. Economic outcomes associated with crises can include: stock market reactions to the crisis (Arpan, 2002; Baucus & Baucus, 1997); losses in sales and production (Arpan, 2002; Baucus & Baucus, 1997; Gonzales-Herrero & Pratt, 1998; Hayes & Patton, 2001; Ulmer & Sellnow, 2002); fines or punitive damages being assessed against the organization (Baucus & Baucus, 1997); protracted legal costs from litigation and appeal processes (Baucus & Baucus, 1997); and less money devoted to and therefore fewer returns on strategic investments by the organization (Baucus & Baucus, 1997).

Image/ Legitimacy Outcomes

Almost by their very nature, organizational crises are likely to affect the perceptions of an organization's image, viability, credibility, and/or legitimacy in the eyes of different stakeholder groups (Pearson & Clair, 2001). Certainly, damage to an organization's image is one potential outcome of an organizational crisis (Gonzales-Herrero & Pratt, 1996; Heath & Millar, 2004; Marra, 1998); however, one of the essential goals of crisis response strategies is to either minimize or re-build that damage (Elsbach & Elofson, 2000; Sellnow & Ulmer, 1995; Ulmer & Sellnow, 2002). In investigations of communicative strategies such as renewal strategies (Ulmer & Sellnow, 2002), the use of labeling and packaging to affect trustworthiness (Elsbach & Elofson, 2000), emphasizing an organization's crisis history (Coombs, 2004), and using strategic ambiguity (Sellnow & Ulmer, 1995) the research found that specific communication strategies could affect the image and legitimacy outcomes of a crisis. Further, Gonzales-Herrero and Pratt (1996) make the point that corporate response to crises is, in effect, a test of corporate social responsibility and social responsiveness among critical stakeholder groups.

Outcomes Increasing Organizational Scrutiny

Because one of the virtually inescapable truths of organizational crises is that public attention will be brought to the case because of media coverage of crises (Moore, 2004), another important outcome of organizational crises is increased scrutiny on the organization by multiple types of groups. For example, Enron's accounting scandal brought greater scrutiny and regulation over accounting practices in all organizations with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. The changes in accounting across industries are

consistent with findings that crises can increase government scrutiny of both the industry and the organization facing the crisis (Arpan, 2002; Heath, 1998). Increased scrutiny is not, however, limited to government agencies; in fact, the media itself and other pressure groups (e.g., activist organizations, stakeholder groups affected by the crisis, etc.) can also become active in seeking information, regulation, participation with, and even taking action against organizations facing crises. The outcome of scrutiny is often associated with the effectiveness of the communicative management of those groups and the media. While scrutiny itself many not connote the most risky outcome category for organizations in crisis, failure to effectively manage such scrutiny can be disastrous for organizations as Heath (1998) succinctly argues: "Poor media management can destroy an organization." (p. 216). Yet, successful management of such scrutiny can improve perceptions of competency-based trustworthiness in organizations (Elsbach & Elofson, 2000).

Interorganizational Relationship Outcomes

Trice and Beyer (1993) argue that organizations seek interorganizational connections to stabilize their experiences in their environment. Sutcliffe (2001) points out that the organizational environment is a social construction, arguing that what surrounds an organization is constructed through organizations—and their members—undergoing a process of noticing, interpreting, and actively engaging what affects it/them. This desire to stabilize their environment is particularly true in two circumstances—uncertain environments and with new or unproven organizations—as the social structure of interorganizational relationships is a consideration when organizations are evaluated by their primary stakeholders (Stuart, Haong, & Hybels, 1999; Trice & Beyer, 1993). During

organizational crises, the environment for an organization can be defined as an unstable one. Accordingly, the final outcome focuses on the crisis's effects on the relationships that an organization holds with other organizations and groups. Ulmer (2001) argues that not only can IORs be effectively employed in crisis response strategies when managing crises, but if an organization's IORs were effectively cultivated before and during the crisis, those relationships can be strengthened over the course of a crisis. Yet, because crises can substantially damage an organization's image, crises also represent a threat to IORs (Heath & Millar, 2004; Marra, 1998). For example, an organization may choose to distance itself as much from another to avoid negative repercussions to its image or to avoid the scrutiny of its practices (Mohammed, et al., 1999).

An Initial Investigation of the SMOCC

The Situational Model of Crisis Communication represents a more holistic heuristic for approaching the study of crisis communication than found in previous models and theories. It examines a linear set of relationships between the three components of the model: situational features of a crisis, message features of a crisis, and outcomes of a crisis. The model can be described as linear because its central assumption is that each component builds on the one before. Therefore, a fruitful place to begin to test and assess the model would be by testing relationships between critical situational and message features in crisis communication. A study, like that proposed here, would address a central weakness in our knowledge of crisis communication—a failure to develop theory-based connections between situational factors and crisis communication (Coombs & Holladay, 2004; 1996; Hearit & Courthright, 2003).

This suggests that a first study applying and continuing to develop the model should focus on the relationships between the two explicitly communicative components of message features, specifically crisis response strategies and the invocation of organizational culture with situational factors like organizational type, crisis phase, crisis type, and channels of crisis communication. These situational features can be separated in two ways. First are those situational factors directly related to specific organizational crises—crisis type, crisis phase, and channel of crisis communication. The second category are those situational factors that effectively characterize the organization—organizational type.

In the initial examination of the SMOCC, the two most important situational factors are organization type and crisis type (see Figure 2 for components of the model to be tested in the present study). Organization type is a situational factor characterizing the organization as being from a crisis prone industry or not; therefore, focuses on characterizing the organization in a way that is directly relevant to organizational crises and explores new information about relationships between CRS and situational variables. Given that the type of an organization or its industry has been identified as an important component affecting an organization's reactions to crises (e.g., Arpan, 2002; Millar, 2004) and that it has not been formally included as a predictive variable of crisis response strategies, the type of organization is an essential variable to include in an initial evaluation of the SMOCC. Including organization type also meets Feldman's (2004) criteria for work that makes a theoretical contribution discussed in Chapter 1. Specifically, to include organization type in this study is meaningful because it is

represents a new level of understanding of crisis response strategies, going beyond previous research on the influence of organization on crisis communication, and can help both practitioners and researchers better understand the components of a situation that influence the selection of crisis response strategies.

Crisis type is the second critical situational variable to include in the proposed study because it is directly applicable to organizational crises and explores new information about relationships between crisis response messages and situational variables. Moreover, while often identified as a critical determinant of crisis communication (see Coombs & Holladay, 2004; Hearit & Courthright, 2003; Seeger, 2002), as Coombs and Holladay (1996; 2004) point out, the relationships between our knowledge of crisis types and crisis communication have yet to be fully explicated. As such, the importance of crisis type has firmly been established, but the proposed research also meet's Feldman's (2004) criteria for work that makes a strong theoretical contribution because it is explicating a set of relationships that have been established as an important set of relationships in the study of crisis communication, but that have not presently been explicated. As such, the findings and the inclusion of crisis type goes beyond a synthesis of previous research, but focuses on testing beyond predecessors' results.

Organization Type

The previous research addressing organization type and crisis communication has four central findings. First, niches and sectors are likely to influence organizational reactions to crises (Arpan, 2002; Massey, 2001; Millary, 2004). Second, the types of

work an organization performs, its routines, and multiple dimensions of that organization's identity can often place restraints on an organization's responses to crises (Ginzel, et al., 1993; Glynn, 2000). Third, industries are meaningful ways to group organizations because organizations within the same industry are similar in terms of function and overall needs (Glynn, 2000). Finally, an organization communicating about its crisis history (i.e., whether they have a history of crises and their severity) can minimize the potential damage of a crisis on that organization (Coombs, 2004). Taken together, this literature suggests that the type of organization facing a crisis is very likely to affect the type of crisis response employed by the organization. This literature also suggests that emphasizing the degree to which an organization is in an industry that is crisis prone or not is a meaningful distinction in understanding the relationship between organization type and crisis response strategies. However, the previous research does not clearly suggest specific ways in which organization type may affect crisis response strategies invoked by organizations during crises; therefore, I propose the following hypothesis and research question:

Hypothesis 1: There will be differences in the crisis response strategy categories employed by organizations, depending on the type of organization.

Hypothesis 1A: There will be differences in the crisis response categories employed by organizations experiencing crises in crisis prone industries when compared to those experiencing crises in industries that are less crisis prone.

Hypothesis 1B: There will be differences in the crisis response categories employed by organizations in different industries.

Research Question 1: Are there differences in the invocation of the forms of organizational culture by organizations depending on organization type?

Research Question 1A: Are there differences in the invocation of the forms of organizational culture by organizations experiencing crises in crisis prone industries when compared to those industries experiencing crises that are less crisis prone?

Research Question 1B: Are there differences in the invocation of the forms of organizational culture by organizations in different industries?

Crisis Type

The previous research addressing crisis type and organizational communication has three central findings. First, crises range in magnitude from small internal issues with few potential effects to those whose magnitude can affect the environment, millions of lives, and an organization's survival (e.g., Hearit, 1999; Pearson & Mitroff). Second, the context for a crisis is a vital determinant of an organization's response to the crisis (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). Third, crisis types include: organizational transgressions (i.e., blame can be attributed to the organization regardless of the organization's intent); organizational events (incidents either in or outside of the organization's locus of control, but that emerge as crises for the organization); and external events leading to crises (such crises are entirely outside of an organization's control, but still represent a crisis for the organization).

Coombs and Holladay (2002) establish clear criteria relating the type of crisis to communicative recommendations:

> The crisis manager should select a crisis response strategy that is appropriate for the amount of potential reputational damage a crisis may inflict. The stronger the potential reputational damage, the more the crisis response strategy must try to accommodate the victim or victims, that is, those adversely affected by the crisis. Publics will expect an organization to do more for victims when the organization is held more accountable for the crisis (p. 168).

This would suggest that those crises, where the onus of responsibility is more clearly borne on the organization—such as with organizational transgressions—that organizations should select message strategies emphasizing the organization's image and accommodation of those affected by the crisis. As Coombs and Holladay (1996) point out with transgressions, "The only viable option is to improve the perceptions of the organization…An organization must show it is returning to adherence of stakeholder expectations" (p. 285). Further in their 1996 analysis, Coombs and Holladay also argue that in crises where the onus of responsibility is outside of the organization's control and where accidents occur that are unintentional that crisis communicators should emphasize issues focusing on the type of crisis, the organization's inability to prevent the crisis, or even portray itself as a victim of the crisis. Finally, the authors argue that in events where the onus of responsibility is ambiguous—such as with many organizational events or even challenges to the organization—that organizations should frame the crisis and its severity and emphasize denial of responsibility. Based on this analysis, I pose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2: Organizations facing organizational transgression crises will emphasize message strategies focusing on self-enhancement, framing the organization, accommodative, and/ or excellence/ renewal crisis response strategies.

Hypothesis 3: Organizations facing organizational event crises will emphasize message strategies that focus on framing the crisis, framing the organization, and/or anti-social/defensive strategies.

Hypothesis 4: Organizations facing crises where the events or actions are outside of the organization's locus of control will emphasize crisis response strategies focusing on framing the crisis, framing the organization, and/or anti-social/defensive strategies.

While the previous research does offer some clear expectations regarding the relationship of some crisis response strategies, it does not—as Coombs and Holladay (2002) recommend—provide a total integration of crisis type and crisis response strategies. In addition, it fails to consider the ways in which the type of crisis may relate to the invocation of organizational culture. Therefore I propose the following research questions:

Research Question 2: What combinations of crisis response strategies are associated with organizations facing each type of crisis?

Research Question 3: To what extent does crisis type influence the forms of organizational culture invoked by organizations during periods of crisis?

Research Question 3A: To what extent do organizational transgressions influence the forms of organizational culture invoked during periods of crisis?

Research Question 3B: To what extent to organizational events influence the forms of organizational culture invoked during periods of crisis?

Research Question 3C: To what extent do events outside the organization's locus of control influence the forms of organizational culture invoked by organizations during periods of crisis?

Additionally, in order to fully explore the relationships between organization type, crisis type, and crisis response strategies, I pose the following research question:

Research Question 4: To what degree will organization type and crisis type be associated with different crisis response strategies invoked by organizations during periods of crisis?

Research Question 4A: To what degree will organizations in crisis prone industries facing organizational transgressions, organizational events, and external events invoke different crisis response strategies during periods of crisis?

Research Question 4B: To what degree will organizations in non-crisis prone industries facing organizational transgressions, organizational events, and external events invoke different crisis response strategies during periods of crisis?

Research Question 5: To what degree will organization type and crisis type be associated with the invocation of the forms of organizational culture by organizations during periods of crisis?

Research Question 5A: To what degree will organizations in crisis prone industries facing organizational transgressions, organizational events, and

external events invoke different forms of organizational culture during periods of crisis?

Research Question 5B: To what degree will organizations in non-crisis prone industries facing organizational transgressions, organizational events, and external events invoke different forms of organizational culture during periods of crisis?

Crisis Response Strategies

The research on crisis response strategies has produced strong findings regarding combinations of strategies. In their analysis of US Air's image restoration strategies, Benoit and Czerwinski (1997) found that US Air used three different strategies in their efforts to manage communication after the 1994 crash near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: bolstering, denial, and corrective action. The authors concluded that while organizations may use multiple message strategies that, "…image repair strategies may not work well together…" (p. 54). This would seemingly suggest that an organization would want to avoid using strategies that seemed fundamentally incompatible—in the case of US Air using denial with corrective action.

It might very well be that organizations are likely to use complementary message strategies when forming their crisis response strategies. For example, in a study of the California cattle industry, Elsbach (1994) found that accounts were often linked to either information dissemination[6] or denial. Additional inquiries by Elsbach (1994) found that: (1) information dissemination was more effective than denial; (2) references to the

[6] She used the term acknowledgement; however, the conceptualization of information dissemination includes the principle characteristics of her framing of acknowledgment.

institutional characteristics (i.e., preconditioning) were more effective than references to technical characteristics; and (3) the combination of accounts, information dissemination, and references to institutional characteristics were more effective than messages with only one of these components. Elsbach's (1994) research makes two important points. First, combinations of message strategies are likely to benefit an organization's overall crisis response strategy. Second, this research also demonstrates that complementary crisis response strategies are likely to be most prominent combinations of strategies. Because the taxonomy of crisis response strategies (see Table 1) represents a new conceptualization of crisis response strategy categories, an update on previous taxonomies, and that previous research has never compared all of the strategy categories at once, I propose the following research question:

Research Question 6: To what extent are crisis response strategies combined in crisis response messages?

The findings from previous research discussed here suggest that not all crisis response strategies are likely to work well together. Further, organizations have most effectively used complementary crisis response strategies together. Therefore I propose that as organizations develop crisis response strategies they are more likely to use an overall tactic that is internally consistent with multiple crisis response strategies. Therefore I propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5: Organizations will use multiple crisis response strategies more often in crisis response messages than single crisis response strategies.

Organizational Culture

While organizational culture has long been considered important to crisis communication; it has infrequently been considered as a specific factor in such studies (see Marra, 1998; Ross & Benson, 1995 as exceptions). There are several studies, however, that establish the inclusion of organizational culture as a critical component of crisis communication. For example, Glynn (2000) identified the communication of symbols to be a central component of conflict and crisis management in a symphony. Further, language and the use of slogans or proverbs has been a mainstay of Nike's crisis communication messages (Knight & Greenberg, 2002). NASA has endeavored to use narratives as a way to characterize itself and a crisis in the wake of the 1970 explosion aboard Apollo 13 (Kauffman, 2001). Finally, in a study of a massive crisis with the Sunstrand Corporation, Ross and Benson (1995) found that communication about practices was used to help the organization manage its image in light of the crisis. Taken together, these examples of the broad invocation of organizational culture demonstrate that crisis response messages are likely to incorporate different forms of organizational culture. Therefore I propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: The forms of organizational culture will be a significant component of crisis response messages invoked by organizations during periods of crisis.

However, because there have been few studies specifically considering the forms of organizational culture as a feature of crisis response messages, there is little knowledge both of the forms of organizational culture typically invoked by organizations facing

crises and the relationship between crisis response strategies and the invocation of culture. Therefore, I propose the following research questions:

Research Question 7: To what extent are the different forms of organizational culture invoked (i.e., symbols, language, narratives, and practices) combined in crisis response messages?

Research Question 8: In what ways are the forms of organizational culture invoked combined with different crisis response strategies by organizations responding to crises?

Chapter 3:

Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

Introduction

Krippendorf (1980) argues that, “content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context.” (p. 21). Because the central purpose of the proposed study investigates the relationships of crisis response strategies to aspects of the crisis situation, a content analysis (CA) of crisis messages will be the most effective method to answer the eight research questions and six hypotheses proposed in the previous chapter.

The function of content analysis is to identify, enumerate, and analyze occurrences of specific messages and message characteristics embedded within texts (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). Babbie (2001) argues there are two types of content in CA: latent content—examining the underlying meanings of a text; or manifest content—examining the visible or surface content in a text. This suggests that CA may be either qualitative or quantitative in nature. Frey et al. (2000) argue that qualitative CA is employed when researchers are more interested in the meanings associated with messages (i.e., latent content) than the trends in message variables (i.e., manifest content). As such, they define quantitative CA as:

> Systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, in order to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption. (p. 237-238)

Because the proposed study is interested in such a systematic and replicable examination of crisis response strategies, a quantitative content analysis is the most appropriate to address each of the research questions and hypotheses posed. Frey et al. (2000) also note that quantitative CA is also a useful method when investigating the effects of important variables, such as crisis type and organization type, on the content of messages—particularly when employing analytical methods like correlation and regression.

In the context of organizational crises and crisis response strategies, CA is a strong method to employ, particularly when selecting messages presented in public media outlets. The media allows public audiences from all corners of the globe rapid access to information about organizations, especially during times of crisis; therefore allowing organizations the ability to actively participate in the communication of "news" about themselves (Molleda, Connolly-Ahern, & Quinn, 2005). The news media is also important because the public opinion of organizations can be shaped through the media's coverage of events, in particular when those events involve the combination of corporate profit, government interest, and/or public risk (Andsager & Smiley, 1998):

> …public opinion is vital to organizations and organizations that seek to understand and shape the pulse of their constituencies. When the actors involved have direct access to the news media, they have the option to communicate their side of the conflit to the media… In communicating information through interviews, press conferences, and press releases, public relations practitioners can transmit organizational policy. Thus, media agents…are capable of impacting the public' frame of reference. (p. 184)

In their study of House Majority Leadership, Malecha and Reagan (2004) underscore the importance of the media as a vehicle that can be used strategically to promote agendas, affect visibility, and significantly frame both issues and the ways they are interpreted by the public by: (a) using the media to signal a group's intentions; (b) using the media to help manage relations with important external stakeholders; and (c) using the publicity to affect image.

Consequently, analyzing news stories about organizational crises that include crisis responses from the organization is a valuable and strategically grounded method for analyzing the proposed research questions and hypotheses. Precedent for such an analysis is grounded methodologically in CA, but also in practice. For example, two recent studies use content analysis to relate crisis messages in the media to variables of interest. Molleda et al. (2005) examined cross-national conflict shifting using content analysis in a case involving a bribery scandal that occurred in the southern African nation of Lesotho. Additionally, Andsager and Smiley (1998) examined policy actor framing of the 1991-1992 silicone breast implant controversy by corporate, medical, and citizen activist groups. Therefore, the proposed study involves a 2 (crisis prone) and 17 (industry) (both of previous are organizational type) x 3 (crisis type) x 8 (crisis response strategy) x 4 (organizational culture) content analysis design. The central purpose of the proposed study is to explore the relationships between these situational features of organizational crises and crisis response strategies. This chapter will: (a) discuss the population and sampling procedures proposed; (b) outline the coding schema; and (c) briefly preview the primary methods for data analysis.

Population and Sampling Procedures

Frey et al. (2000) point out that the first step in conducting a content analysis is to effectively identify and specify the population to which the researcher wants to generalize. The authors also point out that one of the challenges in identifying populations and a sample with content analysis is the sample frame must be effectively constructed. This section will first discuss the procedures used to derive the population and then the sampling methods used.

Deriving the Population

This study used the search engine Lexis/Nexis™[7] to identify the population because effective precedent and procedure for its use has been established in studies analyzing crisis communication in news stories. In a 2003 study of the ways in which organizations integrate the Internet into their crisis response messages, Perry et al. identified their study population by surveying the two most widely used news websites—CNN.com and MSNBC.com—to identify crises meeting three criteria. First, to be included in the study, the crisis had to be significant enough to disrupt the organization. Second, the crisis had to attract extensive news media coverage. Finally, the crisis had to be a situation where public concern necessitated a 'need to know' circumstance for the organization's communication. Further, in their analysis of the silicone breast implant controversy, Andsager and Smiley (1998) included six major regional or national newspapers in their sample and did an exhaustive key word search for "silicone breast

[7] Lexis/Nexis™ is a collection of news stories, Congressional Testimony, business publications, and scientific/medical shorts that is updated daily with local, national, and international publications. It is a comprehensive data base of news articles published in the English language.

implants" for a three-month period to obtain all news stories possible. Finally, in their study of cross-national conflict shifting, Molleda et al. (2005) used the Lexis/Nexis™ database to identify news stories about the bribery scandal in Lesotho. In their discussion, the authors point out that Lexis/Nexis™ is a database emphasizing prestigious, traditional daily, and English-language media that give greater weight to traditional voices such as the government and corporations in the reporting of the news.

Taken together, these studies (i.e., (Andsager & Smiley, 1998; Molleda et al., 2005; Perry et al., 2003) help to establish a rigorous procedure for identifying the population to which a content analysis of crisis communication may generalize. There are five components of this procedure. First, media sources are an effective outlet to derive a population of organizational crisis significant enough to disrupt the organization. Second, it is important to identify a priori criteria, specific to organizational crises to determine their inclusion in the population. Third, specific time frames should be used in identifying the sample's population. Fourth, exhaustive searches including relevant key word searches are effective in maximizing cases to be included in the population. Finally, the selection of effective and appropriate databases for searching is critical to identifying an appropriate study population from which the sample may be drawn.

Applying this procedure for forming criteria, the proposed study identified its study population based on the following six criteria. First, the search for organizational crises was limited to six months—between the October 1, 2004 and March 31, 2005. Contemporary and even ongoing crises were selected because one of the primary goals of

the study is to apply the SMOCC analyzing crisis response strategies and crisis situations relevant to organizations today.

Second, within the time frame, an exhaustive search for organizational crises was performed in the Lexis/Nexis™ business and industry index. Lexis/Nexis™ is considered to be one of the most comprehensive indexes of current news articles that focus on stories from prestigious, daily, and English-language media that gives weight to industry voices (Molleda et al., 2005); therefore, it is an appropriate search engine for a study of response strategies by organizations in crisis. An initial search on the term "organizational crisis" was used and yielded an unusable search result[8]. Alternatively a more specific key term search was performed using key terms identified in previous crisis communication literature and reflected by Table 3. Key terms included: illegal corporate behavior, price fixing, antitrust violations, discrimination, patent infringement, securities fraud, technical breakdowns, accidents, crashes, product recall, mega damage, human error, organizational misdeeds, injury, mergers, failed mergers, strikes, work stoppage, employee lockout, labor negotiations, downsizing, layoffs, economic downturns, bankruptcy, buyouts, hostile takeovers, acquisitions, workplace violence, shootings, stabbings, sexual harassment, rumors, false information, product tampering, malevolence, challenges, pressure groups, activism, boycotts, shifting political attitudes, federal legislation, political attitudes, natural disasters, hurricane, floods, tornados, tsunami, earthquakes, terrorism, terrorist attack, collapse in demand, and infrastructure breakdown.

[8] Search results on Lexis/Nexis™ yielding over 1000 articles are not listed and the engine requires that the search is modified.

Third, the crisis had to be significant enough to be reported in a major regional or national publication. The use of Lexis/Nexis™ as the search database helped to ensure this criteria was met without undue bias placed on researcher knowledge of major papers.

Fourth, the crisis had to be significant enough to attract multiple days of coverage. This was an effort to make Perry et al.'s (2003) criterion of a crisis that was significant enough to disrupt the organization more concrete.

Fifth, because the focus of the proposed study emphasizes crisis response messages, in the initial reporting of the incident, a company had to have a response to the crisis. In so doing, this also demonstrates the organization taking an active role in trying to communicate about the crisis as several authors (i.e., Andsager & Smiley, 1998; Molleda, et al., 2005) suggest.

Finally, because of the Lexis/Nexis™ bias for English-language media (Molleda et al., 2005), the population was limited to crises affecting U.S.-based companies. One of the primary findings from Molleda et al.'s (2005) research was that there is a significant geographic bias for reporting stories relevant to that area's population. In order to avoid a population bias by analyzing crises from foreign-based companies only reported in English-speaking papers, the population for the study remains more consistent and any sample drawn from it more generalizable if the strength of the database is also emphasized in the population.

Applying these six criteria, all possible and reasonable effort was taken to identify a consistent and exhaustive population of the organizational crises emerging from

October 1, 2004-March 31, 2005. A total of 1072 distinctive organizational crises were identified in this period.

Deriving the Study Sample

Glass and Hopkins (1996) argue that, “Except in surveys, it is almost impossible to select a true random sample from the population because of logistic barriers. Never-the-less, this is the goal and researchers should strive to get as close to the goal as they possibly can.” (p. 229). Kerlinger (1992) defines randomization as a “method of drawing a portion of a population or universe so that all possible samples of a fixed size *n* have the same probability of being selected.” (p. 110). He points out this can be achieved in one of two ways; from random assignment to categories or random selection for inclusion in the study.

A stratified sampling procedure was employed in this study and the unit of analysis is the single news story for a crisis. While drawing a completely random sample from the study population would achieve the, statistically, best sample, statis caely, it does not ensure this sample population would be representative; therefore, the potential for error due to sampling would increase substantially. Because crisis type has previously been found to correlate to particular crisis response strategies, in order to improve this study’s generalizability and decrease the probability of sampling error, the proposed study will employ a stratified random sampling procedure to identify the crises for the sample. Babbie (2001) indicates in such a procedure that instead of randomly selecting from the population, the sample is organized into subsets—in this case stratified based on crisis type—then cases will be randomly selected within each subset. He also argues that

stratified random samples are appropriate sampling procedures in content analyses. In order to stratify the sample a preliminary assessment, based on the search term used, of the crisis type was made to ensure an approximate balance among the three crisis types.

In maintaining a balance between crisis types and ensuring the criteria for selection, discussed above were appropriately employed, from the 1072 distinctive crises identified for the period, crises were removed if they had fewer than three news stories covering the crisis during the period. Once that adjustment to the population was made, crises were selected at random within each category of crisis type (i.e., organizational transgressions, organizational events, and events outside the organization's control) by numbering the crises and using a random number generator to select the crises. This resulted in a total of 47 viable organizational transgressions, 50 viable organizational events, and 36 viable events outside of the organization's control. For each of the 133 total crises selected, three news stories were selected; the first story on the crisis including a message(s) from the organization, the last story on the crisis including a message(s) from the organization, and a story approximately in the middle of the crisis including a message(s) from the organization. This resulted in a total sample size of 399 news stories for the study. While the message selection is purposive in its sampling procedure, the study remains based on a probability sample because it uses a random sampling procedure in at least one stage of sampling (Kerlinger, 1992).

Coding Scheme

Previous studies of crisis response messages (e.g., Benoit & Czerwinski, 1997; Elsbach, 1994; Greer & Moreland, 2003; Genderson, 2003; Kauffman, 2001) emphasize

that when studying crisis communication, examining the interplay of messages and different strategies employed affords researchers more information about an organization's approach to crisis communication. This is informative in terms of selecting a unit of analysis for this study. Because the proposed study examines the relationships between situation and crisis response strategies, the unit of analysis that makes the most sense is a full crisis message—specifically operationalized as a single news story. That is, each of the three news stories sampled per crisis, any statements from interviews, press releases, or press conferences will be coded as three units of analysis.

There were two independent coders—the researcher and one other—each coded a total of 60 percent of the sample. Additionally, to ensure the viability of the sample and the coding scheme as well as to train the second coder—an undergraduate research assistant—ensuring the consistency of the interpretations and coding scheme in 10 percent of the sample (five percent per coder) the coders collaborated to ensure they were consistent in their coding approach and to identify any problems or needs from the sample. This preliminary coding found the overall coding scheme and instructions for each content category to be viable. Therefore the remainder of the sample was independently coded. Following procedures to establish intercoder reliability used by Molleda et al. (2005), an additional 10 percent of the sample was randomly selected for both of the coders to code. An overall intercoder reliability analysis was conducted finding the coding scheme to be reliable ($\alpha = .91$).

The coding scheme is based on manifest content, for each variable, operationalized and described in detail in chapter 2 and is reflected in Tables 1, 2, 3, and

5. Nine elements of either the situation or crisis response messages were coded producing nominal data. First, each of the 133 crises were assigned a number. Second each of the messages coded will be assigned a code 1-3. The codes will be assigned based on the date of the article (i.e., the earliest article will be labeled "1", the middle "2", and the last "3").

Third, each organizational type will be identified as both industry and crisis prone versus non-crisis prone. Because organization type was operationalized as "crisis prone and non-crisis prone", coding for industry was also conducted based first on the 2002 NAICS listing of American Industries (Table 2 will be used for the description of the industry) (α =. 98) and then on Millar's (2004) findings regarding those industries that are the most crisis prone (α = .99). There were more units of analysis for crisis prone industries (see Table 6, n = 267) including finance and insurance; professional, scientific, and technical services; information; transportation and warehousing; manufacturing; and mining than non crisis prone industries (n = 132). As Table 7 demonstrates there were between 3 and 114 units of analysis for each Industry included in the sample (M = 23.47).

Fourth, the crisis type (i.e., organizational transgression, events, or events outside the organization's control) was identified. Fifth, for the purposes of sample description, the specific crisis (e.g., illegal corporate behavior, workplace violence, or rumor) will also be identified (for organizational transgressions α = .93, for organizational events α = .95, for events outside the organization's control α = .94). For each crisis, only one type will be identified—the predominant "issue" were judged to be the type of crisis the organization is facing (α = .94). Table 8 includes the descriptive statistics for crisis type. There were a total of 142 units of analysis for organizational transgressions with the

greatest number being examples of illegal corporate behavior (n = 92), but with examples in each of the types of organizational transgressions. There were a total of 149 units of analysis for organizational events with the greatest number being examples of mergers/ failed mergers (*n* = 66) and economic downturns requiring organizational action (*n* = 56), but with examples in each of the types of organizational events. There were a total of 108 units of analysis for events outside the organization's control with the greatest number being rumors (*n* = 49), challenges (*n* = 23), and natural disasters (*n* = 27), but with examples in each of the types of events outside the organization's control.

Sixth, for each of the eight crisis response strategy categories (self-enhancement α = .75, routine communication α = .76, framing the crisis α = .88, framing the organization α = .86, anti-social or defensive α = .91, accommodative α = .83, excellence/renewal α = .86, or emphasizing interorganizational relationships α = 84) identified by Table 1 and discussed in chapter 2, the presence or not presence of the strategy in each unit of analysis were be coded (α = .84). Seventh, for the purposes of description, the specific crisis response strategies were also be coded (e.g., transcendence, apologia, or burnishing). Table 9 includes the descriptive statistics for crisis response strategies invoked during crises.

Eighth, the primary strategy employed for each unit of analysis were evaluated by the coders to identify which of the crisis response strategy categories was the focus for each unit of analysis (α = .92). See Table 10 for the descriptive statistics of the primary strategy category employed. The most common strategy categories employed as the

primary strategy category were those that frame the crisis (n = 118) and anti-social or defensive strategies (n = 139).

Ninth, for each of the four forms of organizational culture (symbols α = .82, language α = .81, narratives α = .74, and practices α = .88) identified by Table 5 and discussed in chapter 2, the presence or not presence of the strategy in each unit of analysis was coded (α = .81). See Table 11 for the descriptive statistics for the invocation of the forms of organizational culture. Cultural invocation of language (e.g., jargon or metaphors) was the most common cultural form invoked (n = 163).

Methods of Data Analysis

Because the present study is primarily interested in investigating the relationships between important situational variables and crisis response messages, content analysis is a strong methodology to employ. Moreover, as Frey et al. (2000) point out, this method in combination with analytical methods is likely to be effective in exploring such relationships. In this section, the analysis procedures for each research question and hypothesis will be highlighted.

Because hypothesis one and research question one are exploring the influence of organization type on crisis response strategies and invocation of the forms of organizational culture chi-square tests were used to identify the CRSs[9] and forms most common for each type of organization. To best understand the two-way distribution (i.e., crisis prone * crisis response strategy or industry * crisis response strategy), a maximum

[9] For the tests, self-enhancement strategies were excluded because there were only 5 total observations of these strategies across the sample.

likelihood chi-square test was used[10] because uncertainty does not pertain to sample size, but to the classification of organization type (Powers & Yu, 2000).

For hypotheses two through four as well as research question three A, B, and C, only the cases including the relevant crisis were selected and a maximum likelihood chi-square test was used to test the two-way distributions (e.g., crisis response strategy * organizational transgressions and primary crisis response strategy * organizational transgressions). Because research question two and research question three (overall) address the differences in the use of crisis response strategies and the invocation of the forms of organizational culture, respectively, based on the crisis type, the maximum likelihood chi-square test examining two-way distributions included all three crisis types and the relevant dependent variable.

Research questions four and five examine any interactions effects for the independent variables organization type and crisis type on the dependent variables crisis response category and invocation of cultural forms, respectively. First, a Logit Loglinear model was applied to test the relationship between the variables. Logit Analysis was appropriate because I was analyzing the relationship between the categorical dependent

[10] $p(f_{11}\ldots, f_{ij}) = \dfrac{n!}{\prod_{i=1}^{I}\prod_{j=1}^{J} f_{ij}!} \prod_{i=1}^{I}\prod_{j=1}^{J} \pi_{ij}^{f_{ij}}$

variable (e.g., crisis response category) and the interaction of the categorical independent variables (Powers & Yu, 2000).

The analysis of the model fit revealed that the interaction for neither Crisis Response Strategy * Organization Type (with separate tests for crisis prone and industry) * Crisis Type nor for Form of Organizational Culture * Organization Type (with separate tests for crisis prone and industry) * Crisis Type would be an acceptable model. Further, the chi-square for the main effects was also found to be significant, also indicating the model was not a good fit for each element (Powers & Yu, 2000).

Because research question six examines the relationships between the categories of crisis response strategies, a number of methods were employed to analyze the data. First, because the data for the inclusion of each crisis response category is nominal, but only based on presence or not, a correlation was performed to identify relationships between crisis response strategies employed in crisis communication messages. Second, to understand the relationship between the total number of strategies used in a unit of analysis and primary strategy employed, the strategies were added together to get a total number of strategies employed and a one-way analysis of variance was performed with Scheffe post hoc tests to examine specific differences between primary strategies. Third a simple chi-square test was performed to analyze the presence of each crisis response strategy in crisis response messages. Fourth a simple chi-square test was performed to analyze the primary strategies used in crisis response messages. Finally, a maximum likelihood chi-square test was performed to compare the employment of each crisis response strategy to the employment of primary crisis response strategies.

Because hypothesis five examines the use of single versus multiple strategies employed in crisis response messages, the data was recoded to indicate single versus multiple strategies and a one sample t-test was performed. Similarly, because hypothesis six posits that the forms of organizational culture will be a significant component of crisis response messages, the data were recoded to examine the invocation of the forms—generally—and a one sample t-test was performed.

Research question seven seeks to identify the relationships between the forms of organizational culture invoked in crisis response messages. As was the case in research question six, the nominal data only has two categories and a correlation between the forms of organizational culture was performed to answer this question. Similarly, because research question eight explores the relationships between the forms of organizational culture and crisis response strategies, correlations were used to partially answer this question. Additionally a maximum likelihood chi-square analysis was used to test the two-way distribution (Crisis Response Strategy * Cultural Form).

Chapter 4

Results of Analyses

Results

Overall, these data demonstrate that organization type and crisis type do influence both the crisis response strategies employed and the invocation of the forms of culture by organizations in crisis (see Figure 3 for a summary of all results).

Organization Type's Influence on Crisis Response Strategies and Forms of Organizational Culture

The influence of organization type on crisis response strategies employed. Hypothesis one posited there would be differences in the crisis response strategies used by organizations depending on the type of organization. Hypothesis 1A posited that there would be differences in the crisis response strategies used by organizations experiencing crises in crisis prone industries when compared to those experiencing crises in industries that are less crisis prone. Hypothesis 1A was partially supported. There were only differences in the use of routine communication χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 4.91, p = .03 and excellence χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 4.24, p = .04 strategies. See Table 12 for the significant results for hypothesis 1A. In non crisis prone industries the results demonstrate, simultaneously, a greater than expected number of cases where routine communication was not present and a less than expected number of cases where it was present. However, in crisis prone industries routine communication was more likely to be employed than expected. Additionally, in non-crisis prone industries, excellence strategies were less likely to be used than expected and in crisis prone industries, excellence strategies were more likely to be used than expected. Therefore, crisis prone industries are more likely to

employ both routine communication and excellence strategies whereas non-crisis prone industries are less likely to employ both routine communication and excellence strategies.

Hypothesis 1B posited that there will be differences in crisis response strategies employed based on industry. These data partially support this hypothesis. There were differences among industries for strategies that frame the crisis χ^2 (17, N = 399) = 30.14, p = .03, anti-social or defensive strategies χ^2 (17, N = 399) = 29.30, p = .03, and accommodative strategies χ^2 (17, N = 399) = 29.87, p = .03. See Table 13 for significant results for hypothesis 1B. As an industry, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting is slightly less likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, are strongly less likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Mining industry, organizations are less likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, slightly more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and strongly more unlikely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Utility industry organizations are more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, slightly more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly less likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Construction industry, organizations are less likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and more unlikely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Manufacturing industry, organizations are strongly more unlikely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, somewhat more likely than expected to employ

anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies.

In the Wholesale Trade industry, organizations are slightly less likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, slightly less likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and strongly more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Retail Trade industry, organizations are less likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, strongly more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and more unlikely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Transportation and Warehousing industry, organizations are slightly more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Information industry, organizations are moderately more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and moderately more unlikely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Finance and Insurance industry, organizations are moderately more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, more unlikely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies.

In the Professional, Scientific, and Technical industry, organizations are highly more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, strongly more unlikely than expected to employ strategies that are anti-social or defensive, and more

unlikely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Management of Companies industry, organizations are more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, are more unlikely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and more unlikely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Administrative Support and Waste Remediation industry, organizations were more unlikely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, strongly more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and strongly more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies than expected.

In the Educational Services industry, organizations are more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, more unlikely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly more unlikely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Health and Social Assistance industry, organizations are slightly more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Arts and Entertainment industry, organizations are slightly more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly more unlikely to employ accommodative strategies. In the Accommodation and Food Services industry, organizations are slightly more likely than expected to employ strategies that frame the crisis, more unlikely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies. In the Public Administration industry, organizations are more likely than expected to

employ strategies that frame the crisis, slightly more likely than expected to employ anti-social or defensive strategies, and slightly more likely than expected to employ accommodative strategies.

The influence of organization type on the invocation of cultural forms. Research question asked if there were differences in the invocation of the forms of organizational culture based on the type of organization. Results indicate that the invocation of symbols and practices is likely to be influenced by organization type. Specifically, research question 1A asked if there were differences in the invocation of the forms of organizational culture used by organizations experiencing crises in crisis prone industries when compared to those industries experiencing crises which are less crisis prone. These data suggest that whether an organization is crisis prone only influences the invocation of practices χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 3.93, p = .05. The results indicate that in non-crisis prone industries, organizations are more likely than expected to invoke their practices in crisis response messages. They also indicate that in crisis prone industries, organizations are more unlikely than expected to invoke their practices in crisis response messages.

Research question 1B asked if there were differences in the invocation of the forms of organizational culture based on industry. These data suggest that industry influences the invocation of symbols χ^2 (17, N = 399) = 30.73, p = .02 and practices χ^2 (17, N = 399) = 31.23, p = .02. In the Agriculture, Fishing, and Hunting industry, organizations are more likely than expected to invoke symbols, and more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Mining industry, organizations are more unlikely than expected to invoke symbols and slightly more likely

than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Utilities industry, organizations are more unlikely than expected to invoke symbols and more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Construction industry, organizations are more unlikely than expected to invoke symbols and more unlikely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages.

In the Wholesale Trade industry, organizations are more unlikely than expected to invoke symbols and slightly more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Retail Trade industry, organizations are more unlikely than expected to invoke symbols and more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Transportation and Warehousing industry, organizations are more likely than expected to invoke symbols and more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Information industry, organizations are more likely than expected to invoke symbols and more likely to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Finance and Insurance industry, organizations are neither more likely nor unlikely than expected to invoke symbols and strongly unlikely to invoke practices in their crisis response messages.

In the Professional, Scientific, and Technical industry, organizations are more likely than expected to invoke symbols and slightly more unlikely to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Management of Companies Industry, organizations are strongly more unlikely than expected to invoke symbols and strongly more unlikely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Administration Support and Waste Remediation industry, organizations are slightly more likely than

expected to invoke symbols and slightly more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Educational Services industry, organizations are slightly more likely than expected to invoke symbols and slightly more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Health and Social Assistance industry, organizations are more likely than expected to invoke symbols and more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry, organizations are more likely than expected to invoke symbols and slightly more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. In the Accommodation and Food Services industry, organizations are slightly more likely than expected to invoke symbols and slightly more likely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages. Finally, in the Public Administration industry, organizations are slightly more likely than expected to invoke symbols and slightly more unlikely than expected to invoke practices in their crisis response messages.

Crisis Type's Influence on Crisis Response Strategies and Forms of Organizational Culture

The influence of crisis type on crisis response strategies. This was measured with three different hypotheses and one research question. Hypothesis two posited that organizations facing organizational transgressions will emphasize message strategies focusing on self-enhancement, framing the organization, accommodative, and/or excellence or renewal crisis response strategies. This hypothesis was tested using both the general employment of the different crisis response strategies as well as the primary

response strategy employed by organizations facing organizational transgressions. These data indicate that this hypothesis should be primarily rejected. The significant individual chi-square tests for each crisis response strategy (see Table 15) indicate that routine communication strategies χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 134.11, p = .00, strategies that frame the organization χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 54.54, p = .00[11], accommodative strategies χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 14.90, p = .00, excellence or renewal strategies χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 36.51, p = .00), and strategies that invoke interorganizational relationships χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 22.09, p = .00 are all present significantly less than expected. Only anti-social or defensive strategies are presently significantly more often than expected χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 6.34, p = .01. Hypothesis two was also tested by examining the differences between primary strategies employed during organizational transgressions. These data suggest χ^2 (5, N = 142) = 101.72, p = .00 that organizations facing such crises primarily employ (see Table 16) anti-social or defensive strategies, strategies that frame the crisis, and accommodative strategies more often than expected. Only the use of accommodative strategies supports hypothesis two. Because the other three were not present, it suggests the prediction was not accurate.

Hypothesis three posited that organizations facing organizational event crises would emphasize crisis response strategies focusing on those that frame the crisis, frame the organization, and/or are anti-social or defensive. This hypothesis was tested using both the general employment of the different crisis response strategies as well as the primary response strategy employed by organizations facing organizational

[11] p = .00 is due to rounding, not zero probability

transgressions. These data indicate that this hypothesis should be primarily supported. The significant individual chi-square tests for each crisis response strategy (see Table 17) indicate that routine communication χ^2 (1, N = 149) = 137.24, p = .00, accommodative χ^2 (1, N = 149) = 46.2, p = .00, and excellence or renewal χ^2 (1, N = 149) = 26.64, p = .00 strategies were all employed by organizations less than expected in their crisis response messages. Hypothesis three was also tested by examining the differences between primary strategies employed during organizational events. These data suggest χ^2 (5, N = 149) = 30.95, p = .00 that organizations facing such crises primarily employ (see Table 18) strategies that frame the crisis and anti-social or defensive strategies more than expected. Therefore, hypothesis three is primarily supported—organizations facing organizational events are more likely to employ strategies that frame the crisis and anti-social or defensive strategies and to a lesser extent, strategies that frame the organization. While strategies that frame the organization were not significantly different than expected, these data suggest they are still a focus of strategies employed. Additionally, while the invocation of interorganizational relationships was not greater than expected and was not significant on its own, these findings suggest that it was incorporated a substantial amount of the time with organizational events.

Hypothesis four posited that organizations facing events or actions outside the organization's locus of control would emphasize strategies that frame the crisis, frame the organization and/or anti-social or defensive strategies. This hypothesis was tested using both the general employment of the different crisis response strategies as well as the primary response strategy employed by organizations facing organizational

transgressions. These data indicate that this hypothesis is partially supported. The significant individual chi-square tests for each crisis response strategy (see Table 19) indicate that routine communication χ^2 (1, N = 108) = 71.70, p = .00, framing the organization χ^2 (1, N = 108) = 21.33, p = .00, accommodative χ^2 (1, N = 108) = 42.82, p = .00, and the invocation of interorganizational relationships χ^2 (1, N = 108) = 25.04, p = .00 were all employed less than expected. Hypothesis four was also tested by examining the differences between primary strategies employed during events outside the organization's locus of control. These data suggest χ^2 (6, N = 108) = 106.15, p = .00 that organizations facing such crises primarily employ (see Table 20) strategies that frame the crisis and are anti-social or defensive. This suggests that hypothesis four is only partially supported because only anti-social or defensive strategies and strategies that frame the crisis are more likely to be employed than expected.

Research question two asked when directly comparing organizations facing each type of crisis if there were differences in the employment of crisis response strategies. Findings using the chi-square analysis for each crisis response strategy indicate significant findings for routine communication χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 12.45, p = .00, framing the crisis χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 35.52, p = .00, framing the organization χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 23.62, p = .00, anti-social or defensive χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 8.92, p = .01, accommodative χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 8.84, p = .01, and the invocation of interorganizational relationships χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 11.84, p = .00. See Table 21 for the results. Significant results were also found comparing the differences in primary strategy categories for the different crisis types χ^2 (12, N = 398) = 68.02, p = .00. See Table 22 for the results.

These data suggest that routine communication is most strongly associated with crises that are outside the organization's locus of control. This was demonstrated by the findings for the chi-square for routine communication alone along with the results for the primary strategy category comparing the strategies and crisis types. Events outside the organization's control were the only crisis type where routine communication was employed more than expected.

Framing the crisis is most strongly associated with organizational event crises. This was demonstrated both in the chi-square test for framing the crisis alone along with the results for the primary strategy category comparing the strategies and crisis types. In both cases organizational events were the only crisis type where framing the crisis was employed more than expected.

Framing the organization was associated predominantly with organizations facing organizational event crisis; though somewhat also associated with events outside the organization's control. This was demonstrated both by the chi-square test for framing the organization alone as well as the chi-square comparing primary strategy categories employed among different crisis types. In both cases organizational events was the only crisis type where framing the organization was employed more than expected, but also in cases of events outside the organization's control it was employed only slightly less than expected.

Anti-social or defensive strategies are most strongly associated with organizations facing organizational transgressions and events outside the organization's control. This was demonstrated both by the chi-square test for anti-social or defensive strategies alone

as well as the chi-square comparing primary strategy categories employed among different crisis types. In both cases organizational transgressions very strongly employed anti-social or defensive strategies and events outside the organization's control employed them at greater than expected rates.

Accommodative strategies are most strongly associated with organizational transgressions. While the chi-square for accommodative strategies alone was not significant, the findings for the chi-square comparing primary strategy categories employed among different crisis types indicated that organizational transgressions employed accommodative strategies about two-times more than expected. In contrast, organizational events and events outside the organization's control used them less than expected.

Excellence or renewal strategies are most associated with organizational events and events outside the organization's locus of control. While the chi-square tests for excellence or renewal strategies alone was not found to be significant, the chi-square comparing primary strategy categories employed among different crisis types showed both organizational events and events outside the organization's control employing these strategies more often than expected.

The strategies to invoke interorganizational relationships were most strongly associated with organizational events. This was demonstrated both by the chi-square test for the invocation of interorganizational relationships alone as well as the chi-square test comparing primary strategy categories employed among organizations experiencing

different crisis types. In both cases, organizational events were the only ones employing such strategies in their crisis messages more than expected.

Overall, these results suggest that when directly comparing the use of different crisis response strategies among the three types of crises together, organizational transgressions are most strongly associated with anti-social or defensive strategies as well as accommodative strategies. Organizational events are most strongly associated with strategies that frame the crisis, strategies that frame the organization, excellence or renewal strategies, and strategies that invoke interorganizational relationships. Events outside the organization's locus of control are most strongly associated with anti-social strategies, routine communication strategies, excellence or renewal strategies, and to some extent strategies that frame the organization.

The influence of crisis type on the invocation of the forms of organizational culture. This was measured by one general research question with three sub-questions. Overall research question three asked to what extent does the type of crisis influence the forms of organizational culture invoked by organizations during periods of crisis. More specifically, research question 3A asked about the extent to which organizational transgressions influence the invocation of the forms of organizational culture. This was answered in two ways. First, the chi-square results for symbols χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 101.41, p = .00, language χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 11.27, p = .00, narratives χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 119.01, p = .00, and practices χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 52.09, p = .00 indicate that each form is employed less than expected (see Table 23) during organizational transgressions. Additionally, when the chi-square was run combining all cases where any organizational cultural form

was invoked, findings indicate that for organizational transgressions, cultural forms are included less often than expected χ^2 (1, N = 142) = 4.76, p = .03 (N = 58).

Research question 3B asked about the extent to which organizational events influence the invocation of the forms of organizational culture. This was also answered in two ways. First the chi-square results for symbols χ^2 (1, N = 149) = 37.75, p = .00, narratives χ^2 (1, N = 149) = 85.70, p = .00, and practices χ^2 (1, N = 149) = 33.83, p = .00 indicate that each form is employed less than expected (see Table 24) during organizational events. While not significantly different than expected, it is noteworthy that language was included more often than expected (N = 78). Additionally, when the chi-square was run combining all cases where any organizational cultural form was invoked, findings indicate that for organizational events, cultural forms are included more often than expected χ^2 (1, N = 149) = 4.20, p = .04.

Research question 3C asked about the extent to which events outside the organization's locus of control influence the invocation of the forms of organizational culture. This was also answered in two ways. First the chi-square results for symbols χ^2 (1, N = 108) = 25.04, p = .00, language χ^2 (1, N = 108) = 14.82, p = .00, narratives χ^2 (1, N = 108) = 62.26, p = .00, and practices χ^2 (1, N = 108) = 27.00, p = .00 indicate that each form is employed less than expected (see Table 25) during events outside the organization's control. Additionally, combining all the forms, results indicate that the presents of forms of organizational culture are as expected, thus the chi-square was not significant.

To further investigate this question, the chi-square comparing the invocation of organizational cultural forms among all three crises at once found significant differences for the invocation of symbols χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 18.31, p = .00, language χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 13.51, p = .00, and narratives χ^2 (2, N = 399) = 6.68, p = .04. These findings suggest (see Table 26) that in cases of organizational transgressions, the invocation of cultural forms is not likely, especially when compared to the other types of crises. For all three significant forms of culture, organizational events were found to invoke culture more often than expected. Additionally, in cases where the crisis is an event outside the organization's control, organizations are more likely than expected to invoke symbols and narratives.

Interactions Between Organization Type and Crisis Type

In addition to the test of model fit indicating that the Logit Regression was not a viable model described in the Methods in Chapter 3, the Wald statistic for the logit model reveals an insignificant interaction for organization type (both operationalizations—crisis prone and industry) and crisis type for either crisis response strategies or the invocation of cultural forms. Because there was no interaction effect, these data suggest that only examining main effects as reported above for both variables is the most appropriate for analyzing the effects of the Situation or Organization on Message features in the Situational Model of Crisis Communication.

Identifying Patterns of Combinations Among Crisis Response Strategies

In order to more fully address patterns and probably combinations of crisis response strategies alone, several analyses were conducted to answer research question six and hypothesis five was posited. The results of the correlation analysis (see Table 27) indicate several significant patterns among crisis response strategies. Initially, while sparsely used, self-enhancement strategies were positively correlated with strategies that frame the organization r = .12, p = .02 and excellence or renewal strategies r =.14, p = .00. Routine communication was negatively correlated with anti-social or defensive strategies r = -.13, p = .01 and strategies that invoke interorganizational relationships r = -.12, p = .02. Strategies that frame the crisis were negatively correlated with anti-social or defensive strategies r = -.30, p = .00 and positively correlated with strategies that frame the organization r =.24, p = .00, excellence or renewal strategies r =.15, p = .00, and the strategies that invoke interorganizational relationships r =.28, p = .00. Strategies that frame the organization were also positively correlated with accommodative strategies r =.16, p = .00, excellence strategies r =.38, p = .00, and strategies that invoke interorganizational relationships r =.33, p = .00. Anti-social or defensive strategies were only negatively correlated with the aforementioned routine communication and framing the crisis. Accommodative strategies were also positively correlated with excellence or renewal strategies r =.26, p = .00 and strategies that invoke interorganizational relationships r =.22, p = .00. Strategies that invoke interorganizational relationships were also positively correlated with excellence or renewal strategies r =.46, p = .46.

To better understand the ways in which crisis response strategies are combined in crisis response messages a one-way ANOVA was performed analyzing the differences in the total number of strategies employed in a crisis response message, depending on primary crisis response category employed. Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was found to be acceptable and the ANOVA (see Table 28) was found to be significant F (1, 398) = 17.93, p = .00 with an adjusted R^2 value of .20. The Scheffe post hoc findings (see Table 29) for this test indicate that the number of strategies included is significantly fewer when the primary strategy category is framing the crisis is then when framing the organization p =.00, excellence or renewal p = .03, or invoking interorganizational relationships p = .00 strategies are employed as the primary strategy. When an organization employs framing the organization as its primary strategy, it will use more total strategies than when an organization employs anti-social or defensive strategies p = .00. Finally, when an organization uses the invocation of interorganizational relationships as their primary strategy, they will use significantly more total strategies than organizations employing anti-social or defensive p = .00, accommodative p = .00, or routine communication p = .04 as their primary strategies.

The third way that research question was analyzed was to examine the chi-square results for the inclusion of the crisis response strategies in crisis response messages. Findings analyzing both individual chi-squares for each crisis response category (see Table 30) as well as for their use as primary strategy categories (see Table 31) indicate that only strategies that frame the crisis and anti-social or defensive strategies were used by organizations facing crises more than expected. Specifically, when analyzing

individual chi-squares for each crisis response category, anti-social or defensive were not significantly different than expected, but were greater than expected $N = 215$ and frame the crisis were significantly different than expected χ^2 (1, $N = 399$) = 41.71, $p = .00$. However, all others including: self-enhancement χ^2 (1, $N = 399$) = 379.25, $p = .00$, routine communication χ^2 (1, $N = 399$) =341.26, $p = .00$, frame the organization χ^2 (1, $N = 399$) = 57.15, $p = .00$, accommodative χ^2 (1, $N = 399$) = 97.27, p = .00, excellence or renewal χ^2 (1, $N = 399$) = 97.27, $p = .00$, and invoking interorganizational relationships χ^2 (1, $N = 399$) = 37.92, $p = .00$ were all found less than expected. These findings were supported by the analysis of the presence of each strategy as the primary strategy category χ^2 (6, $N = 398$) = 277.73, $p = .00$. These data suggest that the most common strategies employed by organizations in crisis are framing the crisis and anti-social or defensive strategies.

Finally, in answering research question six, the chi-square results comparing the use of each strategy category to the primary strategy employed indicated strong results. See Table 32 for the results. When routine communication is employed as a strategy χ^2 (6, $N = 398$) = 93.32, $p = .00$ it was found in crisis response messages more often than expected when the primary strategies were framing the organization, accommodative, and routine communication. When framing the crisis was employed as a strategy χ^2 (6, $N = 398$) = 162.71, $p = .00$, it was found in crisis response messages more often than expected when the primary strategies were framing the crisis, framing the organization, excellence or renewal, or invoking interorganizational relationships. When framing the organization was employed as a strategy χ^2 (6, $N = 398$) = 139.10, $p = .00$ it was found in crisis

response messages more often than expected when the primary strategies were framing the organization, excellence or renewal, or invoking interorganizational relationships. When anti-social or defensive were employed as a strategy χ^2 (6, N = 398) = 183.99, p = .00, it was only found in crisis response messages more often than expected when the primary strategy was also anti-social or defensive. When accommodation was employed as a strategy χ^2 (6, N = 398) = 163.43, p = .00, it was found in crisis response messages more often than expected when the primary strategies were framing the organization, accommodative, or excellence or renewal. When excellence or renewal was employed as a strategy χ^2 (6, N = 398) = 120.18, p = .00, it was found in crisis response messages more often than expected when the primary strategies were framing the organization, accommodative, excellence or renewal, or invoking interorganizational relationships. Finally, when invoking interorganizational relationships was employed as a strategy χ^2 (6, N = 398) = 87.69, p = .00, it was found in crisis response messages more often than expected when the primary strategies were framing the organization, accommodative, excellence or renewal, or invoking interorganizational relationships.

Hypothesis five posits that organizations will use crisis response strategies in combination (i.e., multiple strategy categories) more often than single crisis response strategies. Table 33 shows the *t*-test results for this hypothesis. These data support hypothesis five t (398) = 70.06, p = .00. In single cases, multiple strategy categories were employed 66.2 percent (N = 264) of the time compared to employing a single strategy category 33.8 percent (N = 135) percent of the time. These findings were also supported

by a chi-square analyzing the differences in the number of times we would expect to find multiple versus single strategies employed χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 41.71, p = .00.

Identifying Patterns Associated with the Invocation of the Forms of Organizational Culture

There was one hypothesis and one research question used to further analyze patterns associated with the invocation of organizational culture in crisis response messages. First, hypothesis six posited that the forms of organizational culture will be a significant component of crisis response messages invoked by organizations during periods of crisis. While the *t*-test was significant t (398) = 20.10, p = .00, the difference in the number of times that culture was included N = 201 versus not included in crisis response messages N = 198 was only 3 cases, so when the chi-square indicated there were no differences between expected and observed values, it suggests that the results are mixed. The values for the chi-square were as expected, which can suggest a significant inclusion; however, to the degree that this was combining all forms of organizational culture would suggest that cultural forms, overall, are a significant component of crisis response messages.

Research question seven asked about the extent to which different forms of organizational culture invoked are also correlated in crisis response messages. These findings (see Table 34) show that the invocation of symbols, language, narratives, and practices are all strongly positively correlated to one another. Symbols is positively correlated with language r =.36, p = .00, narratives r =.42, p = .00, and practices r =.32,

p = .00. Language is positively correlated with narratives r =.26, p = .00 and practices r =.33, p = .00. Narratives are positively correlated with practices r =.35, p = .00.

Patterns of Crisis Response Strategies and Invocation of the Forms of Organizational Culture

Finally, research question eight asked about the ways in which the forms of organizational culture are invoked with different crisis response strategies by organizations responding to crisis situations. This question was answered in two ways. First, correlations reveal many significant relationships between the strategies and forms invoked in crisis response messages (see Table 35). The invocation of symbols is positively correlated with self-enhancement r =.18, p = .00, frame the crisis r =.16, p = .00, frame the organization r =.41, p = .00, accommodative r =.16, p = .00, excellence or renewal r =.35, p = .00, and invoking interorganizational relationships r =.28, p = .00 strategies. The invocation of language is positively correlated with frame the crisis r =.19, p = .00, frame the organization r =.41, p = .00, accommodative r =.26, p = .00, excellence or renewal r =.35, p = .00, and invoking interorganizational relationships r =.28, p = .00 strategies. Narratives are positively correlated with frame the crisis r =.17, p = .00, frame the organization r =.27, p = .00, accommodative r =.13, p = .00, excellence or renewal r =.31, p = .00, and invoking interorganizational relationships r =.28, p = .00 strategies. Finally practices are positively correlated with self-enhancement r =.15, p = .00, frame the organization r =.34, p = .00, anti-social r =.13, p = .00, accommodative r =.21, p = .00, excellence or renewal r =.34, p = .00, and invoking interorganizational relationships r =.29, p = .00 strategies.

To answer research question eight, the chi-square analysis comparing crisis response strategies and organizational cultural forms revealed a large number of significant results (see Table 36 for the results). When strategies that frame the crisis were employed symbols χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 9.96, p = .00, language χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 13.63, p = .00, and narratives χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 12.06, p = .00 were all invoked more often than expected. When strategies that frame the organization were employed symbols χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 65.51, p = .00, language χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 67.53, p = .00, narratives χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 29.25, p = .00, and practices χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 46.62, p = .00 were all invoked more often than expected. When anti-social or defensive strategies were employed only practices χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 7.21, p = .01 were invoked more often than expected. When accommodative strategies were employed symbols χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 9.96, p = .00, language χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 25.93, p = .00, narratives χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 6.94, p = .01, and practices χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 17.02, p = .00 were all invoked more often than expected. When excellence or renewal strategies were employed symbols χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 48.54, p = .00, language χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 88.84, p = .00, narratives χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 38.51, p = .00, and practices χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 46.77, p = .00 were all invoked more often than expected. When invoking interorganizational relationships were employed symbols χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 30.83, p = .00, language χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 91.29, p = .00, narratives χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 30.43, p = .00, and practices χ^2 (1, N = 399) = 33.94, p = .00 were all invoked more often than expected.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusions: Understanding the Puzzle

Introduction

From the beginning, there have been two primary goals for this study. The first goal was to develop a theoretical model that would connect our knowledge of crisis response messages to the situational and organizational factors likely to affect those messages. This goal recognized that one of the strengths in the study of crisis communication is a breadth of description of strategies that organizations employ to try to manage crisis situations; however, I also emphasized that the greatest weakness was a lack of a strong model to explain when those strategies were likely to be employed. Building from the first goal, the second goal was to more effectively describe the features of messages used in crisis communication statements by connecting them to characteristics of context. Allen and Caillouet (1994) argue that such an endeavor is valuable because, "It is important to study the actual complex milieu of messages occurring in the public arena because these messages potentially build and shape public perceptions of legitimacy." (p. 56) I believe that this study has been successful in meeting those two goals. This study is an important step in developing the Strategic Model of Crisis Communication linking the strategic components of organizational crisis response messages with the situational and organizational factors that most directly influence those strategies and message components. Such a study situates both academics and practitioners to better understand the phenomenon of crisis communication. In discussing the findings and contributions of this research, this chapter will: (a) discuss the results in terms of each of the major variables included in the study; (b) discuss the study's

contributions to the SMOCC, crisis communication, and the field of organizational communication; and (c) discuss potential future work associated with the SMOCC.

Before discussing the primary findings, one important finding, or in this case a non-finding, was with regard to two of the strategy categories discussed in the literature and tested in this study. While authors have suggested that self-enhancement and routine communication strategies—including marketing, image advertising, communication of mission, annual reports, and newsletters can be invoked in response to crisis situations (e.g., Fiol, 1995; Heath 1994; Proto & Supino, 1999; Scott & Lane, 2000), these data suggest they are not employed to an important degree in public and print media-oriented statements. This finding runs somewhat contrary to Allen and Calliouet's (1994) findings that self-enhancement strategies were a primary strategy in responding to crises. However, this difference is likely attributable to differences in the operationalization of these strategies because what they coded as self-enhancement strategies was a general term for any effort to make the organization appear strong. In the present study, the operationalizations for each of the strategy categories were based on more common taxonomies of crisis response strategies. These may be valuable strategies to examine with other channels of crisis communication; however, they were of little consequence when organizational representatives discuss crises with the media.

Discussion of the Results

In designing this study, I argued there were significant gaps in our knowledge and understanding connecting organizational and situational factors to crisis response messages that are communicated. Many of the connections grounding the hypotheses and

research questions have been made based on case studies and analytic arguments; therefore, by answering questions, verifying, or rejecting present thought in a cross-sectional design, these results mark a decided step forward in the study of crisis response messages. This discussion of the results will first address the influence of organization type on crisis response messages, second the influence of crisis type on crisis response messages, and finally discuss the new information learned from this study about crisis response strategies themselves along with the invocation of the forms of organizational culture in CRMs.

Organization Type

Because previous research has argued that an organization's identity, needs, and often reactions to organizations is grounded by the industry to which the organization belongs (e.g., Arpan, 2002; Ginzel, et al., 1993; Glynn, 2000; Millar, 2004), this study began by conceptualizing organization type as being grounded by industry and two operationalizations emerged from that definition. First, Coombs (2004) had argued that an organization's history with crises would influence its responses to crises; therefore, because organizations draw many of their needs, identity, and modus operandi from their industries, this study examined the effects of being in a crisis-prone industry on crisis response messages. Second, to further examine organization type, the broader operationalization of 'industry' was employed to identify if industries respond to crises in similar ways.

Crisis prone versus non-crisis prone industries. Essentially, whether an industry belonged to a crisis prone versus a non-crisis prone industry had little influence on either

the crisis response strategies used or the forms of organizational culture invoked in their messages. There were, however, two exceptions to this finding. First, crisis prone industries are more likely to employ Excellence or Renewal Strategies; at the same time, non-crisis prone industries are less likely to employ these strategies than expected. What makes this particular finding interesting is that part of the 'point' in employing these strategies is that the organization is demonstrating that it is committed to moving forward or beyond the crisis (e.g., Henriques & Sadorsky, 1999). This suggests that organizations in industries who are more likely to have experienced crises or see their competition go through them have a greater propensity to look beyond the crisis, as part of their approach to crisis communication and crisis management whereas organizations in less crisis prone industries are more apt to focus on the crisis itself in their CRMs.

This analysis is complemented by the finding for the invocation of organizational culture. The non-crisis prone organizations focus more on the present than looking ahead because they are much more likely to invoke their present practices by either discussing organizational rituals or routines. These two findings support a consistency in the approach of crisis prone and non-crisis prone industries. These findings suggest that the primary difference in approach (see Table 37) between crisis prone and non-crisis prone industries is a future versus present orientation in their crisis response messages. Crisis prone industries emphasize a *future-oriented approach*—including, perhaps, avoiding discussing present circumstances, the present situation, or their practices directly. In 2005 a federal judge issued a summary judgment in a patent infringement lawsuit brought by Epson against Multi-Union Trading Company, Ltd—a large manufacturer of off-brand

cartridges. In a statement after the judgment, Dan Crane, the senior vice president of marketing for Epson demonstrated the future-oriented approach in the following statement that emphasizes both Excellence/ Renewal and IOR strategies:

> We are pleased by this important progress in the Multi-Union case. We will continue vigorous enforcement of our intellectual property rights to protect our innovative printers and printer supplies against unfair competition of all types including patent infringement, unsubstantiated performance claims, and counterfeiting.

Non-crisis prone industries emphasize a more *present-oriented approach*—they seem more likely to take on the crisis more directly. In 2005, as the National Hockey League was facing the decision whether to cancel the season with the ongoing NHL owner lockout, a statement supporting the NHL Players Association, made by the Service Employees International Union's Canadian vice president demonstrated a present-oriented approach emphasizing both defensive/ anti-social and accommodative strategies:

> Hockey is Canada's game and it would be a disservice to all fans if the season were to be cancelled. Our members are hockey fans, but we stand in solidarity with the players and respect their rights when it comes to the collective bargaining process. It's important to remember why the NHLPA exists. Players in the early days of the NHL had to keep day jobs and had trouble making ends meet. Their compensation today illustrates the effectiveness of the collective bargaining process.

Effects of industry. The specific industry to which an organization belongs demonstrated a greater number of differences in strategies employed and cultural forms invoked. This suggests that industry is probably a stronger predictor of differences in crisis communication messages than the broader operationalization of crisis prone and non-crisis prone organizations. This finding directly supports previous analysis (e.g., Arpan, 2002; Millar, 2004; Sutton, 2003) that it would make sense for a 'niche' or 'sector' to influence an organization's reaction to crises because there are likely commonalities in organizational routines, stressors, and identities among such organizations. However, because Hypothesis 1B was only partially supported in its prediction that industry would influence the strategies, it also suggests that there are limits on the degree to which industry influences an individual organization's responses to crisis situations. This cautiousness was also confirmed with findings for Research Question 1 where industry did affect the invocation of cultural forms, but only two of the forms. More optimistically, these data support that industry does influence the use of strategies that frame the crisis, anti-social or defensive strategies, and accommodative strategies as well as the invocation of the cultural forms of symbols and practices.

Based on industry, five more approaches (see Table 37) to the use and combination of crisis response strategies also emerged from these data. The first approach that emerged from the findings for the influence of industry on the use of CRSs was an *aggressive approach.* An aggressive approach is one where the organization's crisis response messages endeavor to tell their stakeholder's what is (or is not) occurring and actively involve being defensive about their role or culpability in the crisis. When

examining industries, the combination of strategies that frame the crisis with anti-social or defensive strategies took the most aggressive turn in the crisis responses. The Utility, Information, and Arts/Entertainment/Recreation industries all employed this approach to using crisis response strategies in their CRMs. One example of such a statement emerged from the 2004 Culinary 206 Strike against Atlantic City casinos as Harrah Casino's president Gary Loveman spoke about the strike using both strategies that frame the crisis as well as anti-social/ defensive strategies:

> Despite the inconvenience the labor action creates, Harrah's is not willing to concede on the contract link. I worry about their capacity to strike me everywhere at the same time. What they would like to do is set it up so they could do that. That's what the strike is all about, we'll just have to wait it out. We will stand firm in this position no matter how long this unfortunate situation persists. We will not ratify a contract that threatens the health of our company and that of the industry broadly. We are not willing to take a contract that supports union leaders' interests at the expense of our employees and colleagues in Atlantic City.

The second is the *defensive approach.* A defensive approach certainly emphasizes any effort on the part of an organization to deny culpability or at least minimize their role in a crisis; however, what makes it different from just the anti-social or defensive strategies is that it also involves an effort to improve their image while denying or minimizing culpability. In the industry analysis, this involved pairing the anti-social or defensive strategies with accommodative strategies. These are two seemingly opposite sets of strategies, but when used as an approach minimizes the organization's role, but

also tries to soften their response. Manufacturing and Administrative and Support and Waste and Remediation Services industries employed this approach to using crisis response strategies in their CRMs. In late March of 2005 Intertape Polymer Group, Inc. experienced an explosion in an external steam generation unit at the company's manufacturing facility in South Carolina. A statement including both anti-social/defensive and accommodative strategies from Burgess Hildreth, the company's vice president of human resources demonstrate the defensive approach:

> First and foremost our hearts and thoughts are with the family of our lost co-worker. IPG is committed to the highest employee safety standards and is leading the investigation into the cause of this incident. We have also offered counseling to those workers affected by this unfortunate event.

The third is the *explanative approach*. An explanative approach emphasizes a combination of trying to define the problem and/ or organization and appearing open or sympathetic as an organization—thus endeavoring to create good will with the approach. In this case, the explanative approach included strategies that frame the crisis and accommodative strategies. The Accommodation and Finance/ Insurance industries employed this approach to using crisis response strategies in their CRMs. While not in an industry that typically employs an explanative approach, Major League Baseball's Barry Bonds of the San Francisco Giants has had to face continued pressure in the wake of the steroids scandal. In his first statement to the media since baseball implemented its drug policy in 2005, Bonds used a strongly explanative approach to his comments emphasizing strategies that frame the crisis and accommodative strategies:

> Allow the drug testing program to work. I commend Bud Selig, the players union, and all the players for trying to put together a testing program that tries to satisfy everyone. I look forward to the day when this thing will blow over. You guys (the media) need to turn the page. Let us play the game and we will fix it. I don't believe steroids can help your hand-eye coordination in hitting a baseball. I don't know if steroids will help you in baseball.

The fourth is the *offensive approach*. In the offensive approach, the organization is trying to create as many opportunities for itself to 'score' as possible by mixing several strategies all at once. The choice to include a very strategy-rich[12] approach might be an effort to reach a number of different audiences or might be a less-calculated effort to cover different bases and potential reactions. In the analysis of industry, it involved the employment of all three significant crisis response strategies—framing the crisis, anti-social or defensive, and accommodative. The Transportation and Warehousing, Health and Social Assistance, and Public Administration industries all employed this approach to using strategies in their CRMs. While not in these industries but facing an organizational event General Motors' spokeswoman Toni Simonetti, and GM CEO Rick Wagoner statements, addressing the company's poor economic performance, employed an offensive strategy combining strategies that frame the organization, frame the crisis, anti-social/defensive, and excellence/renewal:

[12] A crisis response message can be thought of as strategy-rich when it includes several different strategies in the same message. On the other side of the spectrum are strategy-lean messages focusing primarily on a single strategy in a crisis response message.

> The rule of thumb, of course, is that you should generate more cash than you consume. But what we said is that it looks like we'll consume $2 billion more than we generate this year. It's entirely a North American issue. North America, simply put, is our 800 pound gorilla. Today's announcement really shows how important it is that we get this business right. We are fighting for every single sale. We want to be smart. We want to offer the best value. But we're fighting for every tenth of a point we can get.

The final is the *single strategy approach*. Obviously, this is the opposite of the offensive approach because the organization most strongly emphasizes a single strategy category in their crisis response messages. These data found that, among those strategy categories employed differently an expected—about half the industries emphasized single strategies. Industries emphasizing strategies that frame the crisis included Professional/ Scientific/ and Technical, Management of Companies, and Educational Services. Industries emphasizing anti-social or defensive strategies included Mining, Construction, and Retail Trade. Industries emphasizing accommodative strategies include Agriculture/ Forestry/ Hunting/ Fishing and Wholesale Trade. In a statement discussing Wal-Mart's closing of a store in Quebec that was closest to reaching a union contract, Wal-Mart spokesman Andrew Pelletier employed an anti-social/defensive single strategy in response to the situation:

> It's a deeply disappointing day for us. The store in Jonquiere has been struggling for sometime economically, and in our view the union's demands failed to takeinto account the fragile condition of the store.

In discussing the approaches to the invocation of organizational culture, symbols and practices were the only ones found to be significantly differently invoked than expected. The three approaches to invoking culture include: culturally rich crisis response messages (i.e., where multiple forms are invoked), crisis response messages absent of cultural forms, and single-form invoked crisis response messages. Because approaches that are culturally rich invoke multiple cultural forms, organizations are more vividly communicating their identity, values, and ideology in their CRMs. Several industries emphasized culturally rich CRMs including: Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishing/ Hunting, Transportation and Warehousing, Information, Administrative and Support and Waste and Remediation Services, Educational Services, Health and Social Assistance, Arts/ Entertainment/ Recreation, and Accommodation. Organizations with CRMs absent any cultural forms are making no effort to communicate neither their organization's ideology nor a strong communication of identity and included the Construction, Finance and Insurance, and Management of Companies industries. Finally, some organizations only invoke one form of organizational culture—in this case that most likely meant that the organization would discuss its practices. Those industries emphasizing practices only included: Mining, Utilities, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, and Retail Trade. However there were also two industries that emphasized an invocation of symbols only—the Professional/ Scientific/ Technological and Public Administration Industries.

Taken together, these findings offer some very specific information about the ways in which organization type can influence the use of strategies as well as the invocation of the forms of organizational culture. Understanding that the use of strategies

also emerges into a handful of approaches affords valuable new information and understanding of crisis response strategies. The emergence of different approaches to crisis response messages confirms previous research (e.g., Millar, 2004) that niche or sector will influence an organization's patterns of communication, but extends previous analysis by offering specific ways in which we can expect different industries to respond to organizational crises. Finally, asking whether organizations invoked elements of their culture is an important question to ask. These data demonstrate that the forms of organizational culture are invoked and invoked differently based on industries.

Crisis Type

Previous research and analysis had argued that understanding the role of the crisis type was paramount in understanding the nature of crisis response messages and crisis communication more broadly (Coombs & Holladay, 1996; 2002; Pearson & Mitroff, 1993). Coombs and Holladay (2002) even make the point that without understanding the relationships between these two variables, crisis managers are unlikely to understand what type of crisis communication is necessary for any particular situation. In their analysis, they also address the types of responses they believe should occur with different types of crises. These recommendations and analysis based in their own case studies and field experiences formed the bases of the hypotheses predicting the relationships between each type of crisis and the crisis response strategies. These data suggest, at best, only a partial support for conventional knowledge on the selection of crisis response strategies in CRMs. In this section, I will address the findings for each of the three types of crises—

organizational transgressions, organizational events, and events outside the organization's locus of control.

Organizational transgressions. Conventional wisdom (see Coombs & Holladay's 1996; 2002 analysis) would tell organizations that during crises, such as organizational transgressions that the organization should select strongly image-oriented approaches; however, this cross-sectional study found that organizations facing such transgressions typically do not emphasize such strategies. There were two ways that organizational transgressions were examined in the present study. First, is isolating organizational transgressions and analyzing the CRSs employed and invocation of organizational culture. Second, the CRSs employed and invocations of organizational culture for organizational transgressions were analyzed in comparison to the other crisis types. Additionally, for each mode of comparison, organizational transgressions were analyzed in terms of the inclusion of any strategy as well as the primary strategy employed for the CRM (see Tables 15, 16, 21, 22).

Across all four analyses of organizational transgressions, anti-social or defensive strategies emerged as the most typical strategy employed by organizations experiencing these crises. Accommodative strategies were also commonly included during organizational transgressions. Finally, to a lesser extent, strategies that frame the crisis were also employed by organizations. This suggests that there is one primary approach employed by organizations facing transgression crises. This approach—best demonstrated in the analyses comparing all three crisis types—is the defensive approach

previously described. In the cross-crisis comparison only the anti-social or defensive and accommodative strategies were employed at greater than expected rates.

While this approach is the only one demonstrated clearly in these findings, we can still expect organizations facing transgressions to typically employ anti-social or defensive, strategies that frame the crisis, and accommodative strategies as the single primary strategy in public or media responses to the crises. These data suggest it may also be possible for organizations facing transgressions to employ aggressive, explanative, or offensive approaches; however, those conclusions are not directly supported in these data. Further research could specifically investigate the inclusion of those approaches as well.

These data also suggest that an organization experiencing a transgression employ an approach to the invocation of organizational culture that is absent of cultural forms (see Tables 23 & 26). While organizations experiencing organizational transgressions do not invoke any form of culture more than expected, they are more likely to use culturally specific language than the other forms. However, taken together with the focused CRS findings, it suggests that organizations facing transgressions focus on a relatively lean public response endeavoring to defend their organization rather than really build on the image with more future-oriented approaches, as the previous literature suggested. Yet, there is an overlap between previous literature's analysis about the approach to dealing with the transgressions and the findings from this study—there does appear to be an effort to be accommodative to those affected in the crisis response. However, instead of tying that accommodation to image, it is tied to a denial or minimization of the organization's role in the crisis.

Organizational events. In the case where a crisis exists where the onus of responsibility is ambiguous—such as with organizational events—present understanding of crisis communication would predict that organizations would employ strategies that frame the crisis, frame the organization, and/or anti-social or defensive strategies (Coombs & Holladay, 1996). Unlike organizational transgressions, these data supported that prediction; however, additional strategies were also employed more often than expected. Like with the organizational transgressions, organizational events were analyzed both alone and in comparison to the other two types of crisis as well as with the use of the strategies alone and primary strategies employed (see Tables 17, 18, 21, 22).

Organizations facing organizational events employ strategies that frame the crisis, anti-social or defensive strategies, strategies that frame the organization, excellence or renewal strategies, and invoke interorganizational relationships more often than expected. Consistently these data suggest that organizations facing organizational event crises employ strategies that frame the crisis most often. However, based on the comparison among the three types of crises, the most typical approach appears to be an explanative approach. While employing several types of strategy categories, with organizational events CRMs were focused most strongly on framing the organization and crisis along with invoking positive good will with the use of excellence and renewal strategies along with invoking their interorganizational relationships. While the explanative approach offers the best explanation of the combination of strategies, these data could also suggest the use of an offensive approach because of such organizations use approaches that are strategy-rich.

This is strongly consistent with the previous literature and analysis on such crises because the primary recommendation was to ensure that the organization controlled, as much as possible, views of the crisis itself then manage the crisis from that point. Overall, these findings also suggest a complex, multi-faceted, and situationally or perhaps organizationally dependent set of approaches to CRMs by organizations facing organizational transgressions. It is also important to note that while multi-faceted and strategy-rich, this is a much different approach to CRMs than either of the other types of organizational crises.

Complementing these findings for response strategies is the invocation of the forms of organizational culture by organizations facing organizational events. When examining the invocation of organizational culture, on their own, organizational events seems to be absent of cultural forms; however, when comparing the invocation of culture to other types of crises, organizational events emerge as crises where organizations invoke culture in a very rich manner. Organizations experiencing organizational events invoke symbols, language, and narrative forms at a greater than expected rate. This suggests, overall, that when organizations face organizational events ranging from mergers to strikes to workplace violence to economic downturns that they tend to use rich and multi-faceted responses to crises; however, responses that also support previous knowledge and expectations about their responses.

Events outside the organization's locus of control. In 1996, Coombs and Holladay argued that organizations facing crises where they had no control over the situation that crisis response messages should frame the crisis, frame the organization, and/or

incorporate anti-social or defensive strategies. The findings from this study support, but only partially support this prediction. As with the previous two types of crises, these findings were analyzed in isolation from the other crisis types as well as in comparison to the other types and by examining different strategies inclusion in the CRMs and as the primary crisis response strategy (see Tables 19, 20, 21, 22).

These data suggest that organizations facing events outside the organization's control most consistently employ strategies that frame the crisis, anti-social or defensive, and routine communication strategies. One interesting finding is that these crises are the only crisis type likely to employ routine communication as an important crisis response strategy. The most probable explanation is that because these events are outside the organization's control, the use of mission or vision and annual reports are one way to manage the crisis and get information about the organization to the public in a situation that they had no control over. This also suggests that there is a predominant approach employed by organizations facing these crises—an aggressive approach. Because the aggressive approach emphasizes an organization telling stakeholders what is occurring and actively being defensive about their role or culpability in the crisis, it is an approach that pairs well with these findings. This is, in spirit, consistent with previous research and suggestions that organizations facing these crises should take a strong approach to their responses. This is also an approach that certainly encompasses the inclusion of routine communication strategies but also the previously discussed inclusion of strategies that frame the crisis and anti-social or defensive strategies as well. This approach and its consistency of employment also makes sense given the nature of these crises—that

organizations have to make sure people understand the crisis and that the crisis is totally outside of the control or fault of the organization.

Like in the case of organizational events, examining the invocation of organizational culture in events outside the organization's locus of control alone would suggest that organizations experiencing events outside their control have an approach to invoking culture that is absent of cultural forms (see Table 25). However, when comparing the invocation of culture among organizations experiencing all three types of crises, organizations experiencing them actually employ a culturally-rich approach to invoking the forms of organizational culture with symbols and narratives invoked more often than expected. Using both symbols and narratives complement the strong and aggressive approach with these crises. In order for the aggressive approach to work, the culpability and nature of the crisis would need to be clear, so the inclusion of a saga or heroic narrative would be a useful way to imbed the denial or minimization and explanation of the nature of the crisis. Additionally, invoking symbols adds richness to the portrayal of the organization as an innocent bystander in a difficult situation.

Taken together, while the findings for each of the crisis types—organizational transgressions, organizational events, and events outside the organization's locus of control—only partially support previous analysis on the crisis response messages, they also demonstrate a consistency and parity in the responses that organizations make to crisis situations. This information is valuable in more specifically understanding the influence that the type of crisis can have on an organization's choices of crisis response messages that it disseminates in public communication channels.

Crisis Response Strategies and Forms of Organizational Culture

Given that crisis response strategies and the forms of organizational culture offer important information about what influences differences in the use of crisis response strategies and the invocation of the forms of organizational culture; yet, are certainly not the only influences on the crisis response strategies and invocation of culture. Therefore, it is also important to examine the general patterns for these two variables as well. In this section I will first discuss the findings for CRSs, then for the invocation of cultural forms, and then their combination.

Discussion for crisis response strategies. The approaches to combining strategies discussed in the previous sections demonstrate that organizational spokespersons approach crisis situations with particular communicative goals and priorities in mind and that these goals and priorities vary based both on organization type and crisis type. This is consistent with previous research on the use of crisis response strategies in response to organizational crises (e.g., Allen & Calliouet, 1994); however, marks a significant development in any previous understanding of the ways in which crisis response strategies are combined in public and media-oriented CRSs. By examining the general correlations in the use of different CRSs, we can more thoroughly understand what approaches or sets of strategies are typically viewed as compatible or incompatible (see Tables 27 & 32).

More than any other strategy, the invocation of interorganizational relationships is strongly correlated to several other strategies. The strongest is that nearly half of the time when interorganizational relationships are used as a response strategy, excellence or

renewal strategies are also used (r = .46). There were also very strong correlations between interorganizational relationships and framing the crisis and framing the organization (each approximately an r = .30). Interorganizational relationships also correlated strongly with accommodative strategies. Because there are four other strategies with significant positive correlations, it suggests that when organizations use interorganizational relationships as a response strategy they are taking, what I previously described as an offensive approach—one characterized by a strategy-rich crisis response. Additionally, there is also a future-orientation and explanative component to these correlations which suggests that these might also be approaches used when the presence of invoking an organizations interorganizational relationships is detected in CRMs.

Another strong correlation is that between the excellence and renewal strategies and strategies that frame the organization (r = .38). Taken together, these strategies represent an approach not clearly evident in the analyses of the independent variables—an *image-oriented approach.* Strategies in both categories emphasize maintaining or re-building an image of the organization despite the crisis. Strategies that frame the organization do so by making claims about the character of the organization as a way to minimize potential negative effects of the crisis (e.g., Coombs & Schmidt, 2000; Marra, 1998; Sellnow & Brand, 2001). Excellence and renewal strategies accomplish this by emphasizing the importance to move forward and the positive steps that the organization is taking to accomplish that goal (e.g., Henriques & Sadorsky, 1999; Milliman et al., 1994; Williams & Olaniran, 1998). This approach is distinctive from, for example, the future-oriented approach because strategies that frame the organization emphasize the

present, not the future; therefore, it seems most likely that when these two strategies are used in combination that an organization is taking an image-oriented approach to employing CRMs.

Excellence and renewal strategies also strongly correlated to accommodative strategies, suggesting that organizations employing these strategies also employ a future-oriented approach. Such an approach is an effort, by these organizations, to move beyond the crisis in order to focus on how the organization can re-build and contribute to those affected by it. Excellence and renewal strategies are also significantly positively correlated to strategies that frame the crisis and self-enhancement strategies. Like interorganizational relationship strategies, excellence and renewal strategies are likely to be used in strategy-rich contexts, but with approaches that are consistent. Aside from the image-oriented and future-oriented approaches, the approach that would seem most likely to routinely appear when excellence and renewal strategies were present would be the offensive approach because they seem to be used most in strategy-rich contexts.

Strategies that frame the organization also tend to occur in strategy-rich contexts with significant positive correlations to self-enhancement, strategies that frame the crisis, accommodative, excellence and renewal, and interorganizational relationship strategies. Since strategies that frame the organization are meant to make strong claims about the organization to minimize the crisis's damage it also makes sense to only emphasize other strategies that are geared at making the organization look good in comparison to the crisis. Certainly, we might expect to see an offensive approach present when strategies that frame the organization are present because of it is a strategy used in a strategy-rich

context. However, depending on the other strategies used at the same time, we might well expect to see a strongly present-oriented approach when note used with excellence or renewal strategies. Additionally, because there is a strong correlation with strategies that frame the crisis (r = .24), we might expect to see an explanative approach used often.

Strategies that frame the crisis and accommodative strategies each had significant positive correlations with three other strategy categories. This suggests that they are a little less strategy-rich in their use than interorganizational relationship, excellence and renewal, and framing the organization strategies. However, they are still likely to be used in strategy-rich response contexts including offensive approaches, future-oriented approaches, and explanative approaches.

Also important in these findings was that, unlike the other major strategies used by organizations in crisis, anti-social or defensive strategies typically did not occur in as strategy-rich CRMs. There were no significant positive correlations to other strategies and very importantly there was a strong negative correlation between employing anti-social or defensive strategies and strategies that frame the crisis (r = -.30). This is ironic given that the aggressive approach, previously discussed in terms of its application to the Utility, Information, and Arts/ Entertainment/ Recreation Industries as well as with events outside the organization's locus of control, directly pairs the framing the crisis and anti-social or defensive strategy categories. This suggests that while atypical, that when we see these strategies used in the same CRM that we can expect to see an aggressive approach to an organization's CRMs and that it is being used in very specific contexts.

In general, these findings on the richness of strategies were also supported by the analysis of variance examining relationships between the total numbers of individual strategies employed in a crisis response message and the strategy categories also employed (see Tables 28 & 29). Like with the correlations interorganizational relationship, excellence or renewal, and framing the organization strategy categories occurred with the largest number of strategies used in CRMs. On average, when interorganizational relationships were employed almost seven different strategies were included in the message. Also high ($M > 5$) were the strategies that frame the organization and excellence or renewal strategies. Not surprisingly, anti-social or defensive strategies were associated with relatively few individual strategies employed in the CRM ($M < 3$). However, an interesting finding was that strategies that frame the crisis were associated with the fewest total strategies included in the CRM, yet still has significant positive correlations with three other strategy categories. This suggests that while a strategy-rich context that when strategies that frame the crisis are present there are relatively few different strategies included at the same time—that the messages themselves are not as complex as with messages including other strategies.

Interestingly, while the other strategies are associated with larger numbers of strategies in a single CRM and/or larger number of strategy categories co-employed, strategies that frame the crisis and anti-social or defensive strategies are the most common strategy categories employed by organizations in crisis (see Tables 30 & 31). They are the only strategy categories where the observed values exceeded the expected values. Therefore, while the other strategy categories are more rich, they are not as

common as anti-social or defensive and framing the crisis strategies. Additionally, taking all of this into account with the strong negative correlation between these two strategy categories, in general we can expect relatively simple CRMs from organizations in public or media-oriented statements. Yet, given that it would seem that simple rather than complex approaches are used most often in CRMs, it would leave the question—is it more typical to employ single or multiple strategy categories? Based on the *t*-test findings, it is more common to see multiple strategy categories employed in crisis response messages. So, even though the most common response strategies are relatively austere in the sheer number of strategies included in each CRM, it is rarer to see a single-strategy approach to crisis communication. Taken together with the other findings, these data suggest that crisis response messages tend to be rich in their approaches—more typically employing multiple strategy approaches even when with relatively straight-forward messages.

Therefore, this research has not only contributed new knowledge of the influence of organizational and situational factors influence on CRMs, but a deeper understanding of how strategies are combined in CRMs. Specifically, there are two significant implications from this research on our knowledge of crisis communication. First, these findings afford researchers better opportunities to make predictions about the nature of crisis response messages based on organizational and situational factors than before. This predictive ability is advantageous on its own because—no matter the research design—researchers will have a better opportunity to identify whether an (or a set of) organization's response to a crisis is typical for both the crisis and type of industry to

which the organization belongs. Second, better understanding and predicting the content of crisis response messages allows researchers to make better informed research questions, inquiries into, and connections between crisis communication messages, organizational image, stakeholder groups, and other outcomes of crisis response and crisis management.

Discussion of the invocation of the forms of organizational culture. Another major contribution from this research is its inclusion of organizational culture as an explicit part of crisis response messages. While some authors (e.g., Marra, 1998) have argued that organizational culture is inextricably linked to crisis communication or that symbols or narratives are often used in crisis response messages (e.g., Glynn, 2000; Kauffman, 2001), there has not been a study to explicitly analyze the invocation of the forms of organizational culture in crisis response messages until the present study.

These data found (see Table 34) that each of the forms of organizational culture were strongly positively correlated to one another. This suggests that organizations either employ culturally-rich or culturally-lean crisis response messages. Overall, the invocation of cultural forms is not necessarily a routine (see Table 11) component in CRMs; however, as the previous discussion of findings indicates that their invocation does complement several of the strategies. This sparing invocation of the forms is also consistent with the findings that the most common strategies—those that frame the crisis and anti-social or defensive strategies—are used in contexts where relatively few different strategies are included in the CRM. This suggests that we would expect to find

invocation of organizational culture in the longer and more complex or strategy-rich public and media-oriented CRMs from organizations.

By further examining the results connecting crisis response strategies to the invocation of the forms of organizational culture, we get more depth and understanding of the nature of CRMs. While there were many strong and positive correlations between the forms (see Tables 35 & 36) and the CRSs, there are several findings that are noteworthy. First, consistent with the leaner findings for the connection of anti-social or defensive strategies to other CRSs, these were only significantly positively correlated (r = .13) to practices. So, when an organization uses anti-social or defensive strategies, about 13 percent of the time we can also expect the organizations to invoke their practices. Therefore, the majority of the time, it is unlikely that organization using anti-social or defensive strategies will invoke cultural forms. This makes the anti-social or defensive strategy category the most lean strategy category—in all ways measured—culturally, correspondence to other strategies, and the sheer number of strategies included in a crisis response message.

Strategies that frame the crisis, our second most lean strategy category had significant positive correlations for symbols, language, and narratives with correlations ranging from r = .16 to .19. Compared to the other major CRS categories, this made strategies that frame the crisis the second most lean category. This was also the only major strategy not to be correlated with the invocation of practices. While interesting, this is not a surprising finding. Strategies that frame the crisis focus on the crisis, not the

organization, so the invocation of practices or rituals would not be consistent when emphasizing the crisis in a CRM.

On the other side of the spectrum, strategies that frame the organization were probably the most culturally rich CRS with an $r = .41$ correlation for both symbols and language and strong correlations for narratives ($r = .28$) and practices ($r = .34$). When an organization is responding to a crisis by employing the framing the organization strategy, they are strongly likely to also invoke their organization's culture. This just makes sense, if an organizational representative is trying to frame the organization to the public and media; they are likely to try to communicate about the nature of the organization. Therefore, talking about the 'characters' in the organization, using company slogans, trying to incorporate the organization into a larger narrative, or talking about the rituals in the company would be effective ways to communicate about the nature and the ideology of the organization in order to portray it in a way to minimize the potential negative effects of the crisis on the organization.

The last three major strategy categories—accommodative, excellence or renewal, and interorganizational relationship—each had significant positive correlations with all four forms of organizational culture invoked in CRMs. Among all three strategies, the cultural form language was invoked most strongly. Its invocation through jargon or slang, humor, gossip or rumors, metaphors, and/or proverbs or slogans were all strongly incorporated into CRMs, especially with excellence and renewal as well as interorganizational relationship strategies as the correlation was very strong ($r = .48$). Otherwise, there were strong positive and consistent correlations for each of the forms

and these strategy categories. This suggests that the same organizations that employed strategy categories that were strategy-rich are also more likely to infuse a culturally rich invocation of cultural forms into their CRMs.

SMOCC Discussion

Taken together, this study deepens and broadens our fundamental knowledge of crisis communication by offering a good sense of the state of the art of current practice of crisis response in public-oriented messages. This study has demonstrated that both situational and organizational variables are likely to influence the crisis response messages that an organization uses when communicating to public and media sources. This study has also demonstrated that the Strategic Model of Crisis Communication is developing as a useful tool for explaining and predicting phenomena associated with crisis response messages by demonstrating that organization type and crisis type are useful in explaining differences in the approaches to the use of CRSs as well as the invocation of the forms of organizational culture.

SMOCC and Organization Type

These findings suggest that organizational variables are likely to influence the communicative messages used in periods of crisis. Initially, while limited in its usefulness, the propensity for an organization's industry to be crisis prone is still useful in understanding many organization's communicative choices. The variable is limited because there is such diversity in the organizations that either are or are not crisis prone that responses are better influenced by other factors. However, it is still a useful organization type variable because these results demonstrated that organizations in crisis

prone industries are more likely to have a more future-oriented approach to their public CRMs whereas organizations in industries that are less crisis prone are more likely to be present-oriented in their public CRMs. Another way to examine the influence of a crisis history on an organizations CRMs would be to operationalize the variable differently—instead of operationalizing crisis prone versus non-crisis prone as belonging to an industry that faces many crises if it were operationalized as a particular organization's history as crisis prone versus non-crisis prone this might result in a variable that more strongly predicts differences in an organization's use of CRSs and invocation of organizational culture.

Industry, however, is a good tool of explanation and prediction of an organization's use of CRSs and invocation of organizational culture. This study was designed to balance the number of cases in crisis type and take a cross-sectional examination of industries in crisis during a six-month period, so despite some very small cell counts for some of the industries not facing many crises in the time period selected, this study still found that industry influences three of the CRS categories—framing the crisis, anti-social or defensive, and accommodative. Industry also influenced the invocation of symbols and practices as cultural forms in public CRMs. It is possible that with larger cell counts for some of the industries that more influence on the strategies and invocation of organizational culture would be found. However, these findings do indicate that industry membership is a strong predictor of differences in approaches that organizational representatives take with their CRMs in public and media-oriented messages.

Taken together, organization type was found to be a useful distinction for understanding CRMs—certainly offering one layer of support for the SMOCC as a valuable model for investigating crisis communication. In the future, additional distinctions or comparisons for organizational type, such as based on sector (i.e., for profit, nonprofit, governmental), might be useful operationalizations for organization type. Because of the industry focus, this study emphasized business sources of CRMs.

SMOCC and Crisis Type

These findings indicate that situational variables—in particular crisis type are very strong predictors of differences in the strategies used and invocation of organizational culture in CRMs. From these findings, a strong picture emerges of the patterns of influence that crisis type has on CRMs. Initially, organizations experiencing organizational transgressions use a strongly defensive approach to their CRMs emphasizing anti-social or defensive and accommodative strategies. Transgressions also typically incorporate the least culturally rich messages as well. Organizations experiencing organizational events have the richest sets of approaches to their public and media-oriented CRMs. We can expect to see strategies that frame the crisis, strategies that frame the organization, excellence or renewal strategies, and strategies that invoke interorganizational relationships most typically. Additionally, this study found that there are a couple of major approaches likely during organizational events—the explanative and offensive approach. This study also found that CRMs during organizational events were also most culturally rich influencing the significant inclusion of symbols, language, and narratives in their CRMs. In crises where the event is outside the organization's locus

of control these data found that organizations are most likely to employ an aggressive approach to crisis management. Additionally, despite the strong inclusion of anti-social or defensive strategies as well as strategies that frame the crisis, when organizations experience these crises they are also likely to employ symbols and narratives in their CRMs.

Value of the SMOCC

These findings offer strength and validity to the proposition of crisis type as a key situational variable in the SMOCC. More than that, these findings also suggest that with continued development and analysis of organizational and situational variables that the SMOCC will continue to develop and be a useful model for examining crisis communication. The better that we understand different variables' influence on crisis response messages, the more effectively we will understand both the phenomenon and practice of crisis communication. This study offers a benchmark test for predicting and understanding how organizations across industries and types of crises 'typically' respond to crises in their public and media-oriented crisis response messages. This benchmark is possible because this study is the first cross-sectional examination of the influence of such factors on the content of crisis response messages. One of very few other examples of cross-sectional analysis of crisis response messages—Allen and Calliouet's (1994) study of the relationship of impression management strategies and different stakeholder groups—was valuable in emphasizing the influence of different stakeholder groups on messages. However, this study progresses from such previous research because it offers a richer taxonomy of crisis response strategies and considers organizational and situational

factors as a prima facie source of influence on the CRMs. Therefore, this study represents a decided move beyond the identification of strategies and their rich case-oriented discussion to a process of theory-building.

This study has offered a much more detailed picture of crisis response messages than previously existed. There are two central contributions that this study makes. First it is a benchmark effort to specifically examine how organizational culture is invoked in CRMs. Certainly, invoking one's organizational culture is not a part of each CRM; however, this study found that they are, overall, a meaningful component in CRMs. Additionally, this study found previously unknown and strong connections between crisis response strategies and the invocation of the forms of organizational culture. This contribution from the research offers a much stronger amount and quality of information about the nature of public and media-oriented crisis communication than previously existed in the research. These findings also suggest that the invocation of cultural forms is one important way that organizations try to communicate their ideology, priorities, and identify while managing crisis situations.

The second critical contribution that this study has made to the study of crisis communication is by moving beyond descriptive taxonomies and examples of crisis response strategies. By identifying the ways in which these strategies are used together, this research is distinctive from previous research in that it has identified actual approaches in the employment of crisis response strategies. Understanding how these rich and interesting strategies fit together when they are used by organizations provides a new direction in researching crisis response strategies that invites case study exploration,

cross-sectional analyses, and longitudinal studies to catalog and develop more sophisticated discussions of specific approaches to crisis response messages—particularly with predictive ability based on organization and crisis type. Essentially, this study provides a basis for new language in analyzing and discussing CRMs—both in terms of the richness of the approaches, response strategies, and invocation of cultural forms and in terms of the actual approaches to response strategies possible combining different strategic categories.

SMOCC research contributions to other areas of organizational communication. Because crisis communication is an area of study that represents a "situation" in which an organization might find itself, there are many important contributions the present research makes to the field's knowledge of organizational communication in crisis contexts including: stakeholder communication combined with organizational image or legitimacy research as well as research in organizational culture. Cheney, (1992) argued:

> Viewed in one way, public relations is the study and practice of corporate public rhetoric: the organization speaking to/with various publics. And, with the expansion of corporate communications into issue management, identity management, or related activities, the role of the corporate rhetor in American society (and for that matter, in the entire industrialized world) is taking on greater visibility and importance. Today we find all sorts of organizations and collectives speaking. Nevertheless, we know surprisingly little about message by, from, and for organizations. Put another way, we have difficulty both in coping with and understanding 'corporate' messages, even though we are subject to and party to

> communication from corporate bodies all the time (messages of businesses, governments, religious groups, lobbies, hospitals, universities, unions, social action groups, and so forth). Neither rhetorical nor communication theory have fully come to terms with the organizational nature of much of communication in our society (p. 166-7).

Fundamentally, these findings offer substantially more information about how organizations speak to their publics during periods of crisis—situations which affect all organizations and represent a real threat to organizations with effects ranging from financial, to environmental, to image (e.g., Hays & Patton, 2001; Pearson & Clair, 1998). For researchers interested in stakeholder communication, crisis communication *should* be a critical concept of consideration when addressing the phenomena of stakeholder communication and image or legitimacy management. In fact, Heath (1994) argues that, "organizational communication is all that is said and done that helps stakeholders enact their relationships with the company…as well as the ways the company communicates its relationship with stakeholders" (p. 161). This certainly applies not only to stakeholder communication, but also to crisis communication from organizations to their multiple constituencies. However, much contemporary research already links stakeholder and crisis communication with image and issue management (Basham, 2001; Greer & Moreland, 2003; Hayes & Patton, 2001; Johnson, Zorn, Tam, Lamontagne, & Johnson, 2003; Trettin & Musham, 2000). These findings offer several contributions to the study of stakeholder and image communication. First, organizations, as Cheney suggests, are speaking. In crisis situations we can expect radically different public statements from

organizations both depending on the industry and the type of crisis being experienced. Because much contemporary research on stakeholder and image management is already focusing on crisis situations, the present research offers a more robust way to examine the typicality of messages employed by an organization as well as the degree to which those messages are focused on actively managing the image, aggressively denying the organization's culpability, or trying to explain the situation. Such research can inform research design, message content, and explanation of outcomes.

Additionally, in finding that organizational culture is an important component to crisis response messages, the present study contributes to the study of organizational culture at a macro-level of consideration. Some previous research on organizational culture has examined it as an industry level of phenomenon. For example, Beyer and Browning's (1999) research found that leaders in the semi-conductor industry created a metaphor of struggle characterizing the industry. Beyer and Browning's work did not focus on public discourse; however, it demonstrates the emergence of a consistent invocation of a metaphor in an industry. The present study expands such an understanding of organizational culture by examining the invocation of forms across both industries and types of crisis. This study is also an extension of the study of organizational culture in crisis situations more specifically as well. For example, in their study of promotionalism, Knight and Greenberg (2002) argue that what has made Nike both more susceptible to activism and more effective in addressing complaints about the company has been in its active integration of identity in their corporate messages. This communication of identity—or communication of specific aspects of their ideology—is

communicated through appeals to their organization's culture. The present study incorporated and expanded this interrogation of communicating an organization's identity specifically in crisis response strategies to identify the ways in which cultural forms were invoked by organizations. The connection between the invocation of organizational culture and crisis response has been identified since the 1980s (Trujillo & Toth, 1987) and continued into the 1990s (Pearson & Clair, 1998), and has remained a connection of interest into the 2000s (Moore, 2004). However, the present study built on previous ways of examining the invocation of organizational culture by explicitly arguing and demonstrating that it is an important variable of interest in crisis response strategies that follows specific patterns based on both industry and crisis type.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While this study's central limitation of an imbalance in the cells for industry and several directions for future research have already been discussed, it is important to develop a more detailed discussion of each. Initially, there was a sampling limitation. While there is no better and more thorough resource for corporate printed press releases and print media coverage of crisis response messages than Lexis/Nexis™; it is a limited sample in that it does not include announcements, speeches, or corporate websites. Certainly announcement and speech segments are included in print media coverage of crises; however, they are also edited for space and content. This could suggest a bias in the types of crisis responses included; however, this potential bias is minimized because the Lexis/Nexis™ data base also includes press releases directly from companies. Because of the random sampling procedures enacted, such a bias should be limited.

However, that does not alleviate the limitation that the present study only incorporated print public rhetoric about crises. Future studies should examine and compare other channels of communication as well.

An additional limitation in the study is the cross-sectional nature of the study design. While the design is advantageous in that it affords the examination of crisis response messages across many industries and offers a strong examination of current practices in crisis response message design, it is also limited because crises often take years to resolve, so a six-month cross-section of crises does not allow for an in-depth analysis of any changes to message components. One alternative design that should afford the same advantages as the cross-sectional, but without its limitations would be a study with a longitudinal design. It would include fewer different crises, but follow each organization's communication about the crisis from beginning to ending.

Future Research Based on the SMOCC

Essentially, there are three major directions for future research emerging from this model and the present study. Initially, the top priority should be given to continuing to develop organizational and situational factors including a more balanced analysis of industry. As I argued in the rationale and proposal of this particular study, these are the factors that ground the model; understanding these factors makes for a stronger understanding of the phenomenon of crisis communication, but also makes better predictions for the outcomes of the model possible. Yet, there is a need to continue to develop and test organizational and situational factors. Other such factors might include the aforementioned particular organization's history of crises because beyond industry

association, an individual organization's knowledge and organizational learning after crises seems likely to influence its future crisis responses. Additionally, there is a need to continue to test for interaction effects between the different factors influencing CRMs, so building more balanced study designs would be useful in order to more effectively examine interaction effects. Finally, it will be valuable to examine changes in these trends over time. This study was certainly influenced by contemporary organizational climates including what industries are affected, the ways they are affected by crisis, an influx of major environmental disasters, etc.; therefore, it will be useful to compare different periods in CRMs to best account for the influence of contemporary organizational environments on organizational responses to those crises.

Once the patterns of influence are understood there are two ways that researchers can further develop our understandings of the influence and outcomes of CRSs. First, future research should explore crisis response message movement through the SMOCC as a whole. This could be accomplished by following sets of crises from start to finish examining all the factors in the model: organizational and situational factors; message features including strategies, invocation of culture, stakeholder decisions, and channels of communication employed; and ending with analyzing the crises outcomes to understand this as part of the process of crisis management. Second, future research should also focus on the persuasive elements of crisis response messages. By focusing on message features, we can continue to develop our understanding of the explicitly communicative elements of crisis communication. This can be accomplished by examining the effectiveness of different approaches to crisis communication—including different crisis

response strategies and invocation of organizational culture—delivered through different channels to different stakeholder groups. This direction would most closely focus on image-oriented outcomes of messages. Across all three directions for future research there is a wealth of opportunity for research, regardless of ontological perspective or research methodology employed. In fact, this model would be best served through rigorous interrogations of it from multiple ontological perspectives along with multiple methodological applications ranging from organizational ethnography to experimental design.

Connecting SMOCC Research to Other Areas of Organizational Communication

For researchers not immediately excited by the future research focusing specifically on crisis response messages specifically, there are also three strong directions of future research connected to other areas of research in organizational communication; stakeholder communication, organizational and legitimacy research, and organizational culture. Because stakeholder communication is a part of the SMOCC, developing stakeholder research and knowledge specifically related to the model will be useful; however, extending the present research to develop other areas of research connecting stakeholder and crisis communication will also yield valuable information about the phenomena. In their analysis of issue management, Cheney and Christensen (2001) argue that an organization's identity and issue management is interwoven, that organizations have many different types of stakeholders—both internal and external—that have to be managed when issues present themselves, and there are balances to be achieved between internal and external stakeholder management. Therefore, one application of the analyses

discussed here including the influence of different industries, crisis types, and approaches emerging from those influences would be to examine similarities and differences in communication to the type of stakeholder (e.g., internal or external). Building on such research, future research connecting stakeholder communication and crisis response should examine the effectiveness of the eight approaches outlined in the discussion with different stakeholder groups and under different situations. Additionally, it would also be interesting to examine the degree to which approaches or crisis response strategies were both expected and desirable by different stakeholder groups. In all, applying the findings from this research to future research on stakeholder communication could be explored using qualitative, quantitative, and experimental designs depending on the interests and research questions or hypotheses of the researcher(s).

Additional research applying the findings from the present research can be used for organizational communication scholars interested in examining organizational image or legitimacy more specifically. One such direction for future research would be to identify communicative goals by organizations in crises along with different types of stakeholder groups, then identify the degree to which the messages communicated achieve both sets of goals, and the resulting influence on the assessment of the organization in crisis's image or legitimacy. Matching goals and communicative effects would be an interesting and distinctive evolution in the study of organizational image and legitimacy, particularly during periods of crisis.

Finally, researchers interested in focusing on organizational culture and its culture can effectively apply the present research. One interesting way to address the 'validity' of

the invocation of the forms of organizational culture by organizations in their crisis response messages would be to compare the cultural messages communicated by an organization in crisis with organizational members' lived experiences with ideology and the organization's culture. Such a study could code crisis response messages for content and/or categories and include either qualitative or quantitative measures of the members' cultural experiences. Such a study would be an interesting way to compare the public and private 'faces' of an organization to identify parity in them. An additional exploration of organizational culture that applies and extends the present research would be to investigate the ways in which organizational leaders and crisis managers translate an organization's culture into their crisis response strategies—including the level of intent as well as methods to translate the lived experience into a public explanation of organizational identity.

As a way of concluding this research, this model, and this dissertation process I go back to this metaphor of a puzzle where the pieces have not yet been assembled. There is process in the assembly—some pieces should go together first, which is why a study of the Strategic Model of Crisis Communication necessarily had to begin by focusing on those factors that influence the crisis response messages themselves. In assembling pieces of this puzzle, this research has made several important contributions to our understanding of crisis communication and in particular crisis response messages. However, from the process of assembly to the interrogation of the picture, future research must pick up to further develop our knowledge and discovery of those connections.

Table 1

Taxonomy of Crisis Response Strategies Potentially Used By Organizations

Strategy Category	Strategy	Strategy Description	Key Author(s)
Self-Enhancement	Marketing	Emphasizing product quality, prices, safety, promotions	Heath (1994), Proto & Supino (1999), Scott & Lane (2000)
	Image Advertising	Providing information to make the organization look positive. Framing an issue for the stakeholders	Heath (1994; 1998), Scott & Lane (2000)
Routine Communication	Communication of Mission/ Vision	Communication emphasizing organizational goals/ mentioning mission/ vision	Heath (1994)
	Annual Reports	Report monetary assets, liabilities, future liabilities, interest in cooperation to increase market value	Heath (1994), Proto & Supino (1999)
	Newsletters	Report monetary gains, attention to stakeholder concerns	Fiol (1995), Heath (1994), Proto & Supino (1999)
Framing the Crisis	Accounts	Development of dominant narrative, use of narrative to explain the problem	Kauffman (2001), Massey (2001), Mohamed, et al. (1999)
	Information Dissemination	Delivering information regarding the issue to educate, often with the goal of increasing stakeholder sense of empowerment	Martinelli & Briggs (1998), Rowan (1996), Sellnow (1993), Slovic (1987)
	Issue Salience	Communicating importance, often uses risk or fright factors and/or scientific discourse	Bennett (1998), Sellnow (1993), Slovic (1987), Williams & Olaniran (1998)
	Preconditioning	Influencing stakeholders to the organization's position on a crisis and their opinions about the organization by: downplaying damage, putting act in a more favorable context, or attacking accusers	Benoit (2004; 1997), Sturges (1994)
Framing the Organization	Ingratiation	Efforts to create positive image by reminding stakeholders of past good works or qualities	Coombs & Schmidt (2000)
	Organizational Promotion	Presenting the organization as being highly competent, effective, successful	Marra (1998), Mohamed, et al. (1999)
	Issue Management	Issue diagnosis, advocacy advertising	Cheney & Christensen (2001), Gonzales-Herrero & Pratt (1998), Hayes & Patton (2001)
	Supplication	Portraying the organization as dependent on others in effort to solicit assistance	Mohamed, et al. (1999)
	Organizational Handicapping	Making task success appear unlikely in order to have ready-made case for failure	Mohamed, et al. (1999)

Table 1 (Continued)

	Bolstering	*An effort to separate the organization from the crisis by emphasizing past accomplishments, stress good traits*	*Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Benoit (2004), Coombs & Schmidt (2000), Kauffman (2001), Sellnow & Brand (2001*
Anti-social or Defensive	Noncompliance	The organization cannot/ does not choose to act	Henriques & Sadorsky (1999)
	Disclaimers	Explanations given prior to an action that might be embarrassing to ward off negative implications to image	Mohamed, et a. (1999)
	Defensive Compliance	Indicating that actions are driven by compliance or requirements	Henriques & Sadorsky (1999)
	Evasion of Responsibility	De-emphasizing role in blame by: emphasizing lack of control over events; emphasizing accident; or emphasizing good intentions	Benoit (2004; 1997), Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Coombs & Holladay (2002), Coombs & Schmidt (2000), Henderson (2003), Ray (1999)
Anti-social or Defensive (Continued)	Shifting the Blame	The most defensive strategy—shifting or minimizing responsibility for fault	Benoit (2004), Benoit (1997), Coombs & Holladay (2002), Coombs & Schmidt (2000), Ray (1999)
	Simple Denial	The organization did not perform the act	Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Benoit (2004), Coombs & Schmidt (2000)
	Strategic Ambiguity	Not releasing many details, able to keep stories consistent	Sellnow & Ulmer (1995), Ulmer & Sellnow (2000), Sellnow & Ulmer (2004)
	Intimidation	Representing the organization as powerful or dangerous, willing and able to adversely affect those who oppose its efforts	Mohamed, et al. (1999)
	Minimization	Emphasizing act or event not serious	Benoit (2004: 1997), Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Coombs & Schmidt (2000)
	Transcendence	Emphasizing more important considerations	Benoit & Czerwinski (1997); Benoit (2004)
Accommodative	Corrective Action/ Compensation	Effort to 'correct' actions adversely affecting others. Can include announcements of recall or offers of compensation	Benoit (2004; 1997), Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Coombs & Holladay (2002), Coombs & Schmidt (2000), Henderson (2003), Martinelli & Briggs (1998), Mohamed, et al. (1999), Ray (1999)

Table 1 (Continued)

	Apologia	Communication of contrition, admission of blame including remorse and requests for pardon, mortification	Benoit (2004; 1997), Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Coombs & Holladay (2002), Coombs & Schmidt (2000), Hearit (1999), Henderson (2003), Martinelli & Briggs (1998), Mohamed, et al. (1999)
	Compassion	Communication of concern over well-being/ safety of public; helping people psychologically cope with crisis	Coombs (1999), Martinelli & Briggs (1998), Mohamedet al., (1999), Sturges (1994)
	Offering Reassurances	'This will never happen again…' Assertions that problems are corrected	Henderson (2003)
	Eliciting Sympathy	Asking stakeholders to feel sorry for the organization because of what happened	Ray (1999)
	Transparency	Emphasizing complete compliance, openness to inquiry, requesting information seeking	Greer & Moreland (2003), Kauffman (2001), Sellnow & Seeger (2001), Sellnow & Ulmer (1995), Williams & Olaniran (1998)
	Volunteering	Seeking stakeholder involvement with the organization as a means of resolving the crisis	Gregory (2000)
Excellence/ Renewal	Dialogic	Emphasizing openness and willingness to engage about the issue	Das & Teng (1998), Milliman, et al. (1994), Nielson & Bartenuk (1996), Williams & Olaniran (1998)
	Exemplification	Portraying the organization as having integrity, social responsibility, moral worthiness	Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Henriques & Sadorsky (1999), Marra (1998), Mohamed, et al. (1999)
	Pro-social Behavior	Engaging in actions to atone for transgression and persuade stakeholders of positive identity	Mohamed, et al. (1999), Sellnow & Brand (2001)
Emphasizing Interorganizational Relationships	Blaring Others	Identifying a negative link to an undesirable other	Mohamed, et al. (1999)
	Blasting	Exaggerating negative features of an undesirable other	Mohamed, et al. (1999), Sellnow & Brand (2001)
	Burying	Obscuring or disclaiming a positive link to an undesirable other	Mohamed, et al. (1999)
	Blurring	Obscuring or disclaiming a negative link to a favorable other	Mohamed, et al. (1999)

Table 1 (Continued)

Belittling	Minimizing traits or accomplishments of a negatively linked other, attacking accuser's credibility	Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Coombs & Schmidt (2000), Mohamed, et al. (1999)
Boosting	Minimizing undesirable features of a positively linked other	Mohamed, et al. (1999)
Boasting	Proclaiming a positive link to a desirable other	Mohamedet al., (1999)
Burnishing	Enhancing desirable features of a positively linked other	Mohamed, et al. (1999)
Collaboration	Emphasizing desire to change and work with another organization to resolve the crisis	Henriques & Sadorsky (1999), Martinelli & Briggs (1998), Milliman, et al. (1994)

Table 2

2002 NAICS Listing of American Industries

Industry	*Organizational Types*
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	All Crop Production and Farming, Greenhouse, Nursery, and Floriculture, Food Crops Grown Under Cover, Nursery and Floriculture Production, Other Crop Farming, Food Animal Production, Animal Aquaculture, Apiculture, Horses and Other Equine Production, All Other Animal Production, Forestry and Logging, Fishing, Hunting and Trapping, Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry, Farm Labor Contractors and Crew Leaders, Support Activities for Animal Production, Support Activities for Forestry
Mining	All Mining, Quarrying, and Support Activities
Utilities	Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution, Natural Gas Distribution, Water, Sewage and Other Systems, Steam and Air-Conditioning Supply
Construction	Construction of Buildings, Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction (utilities, water/sewer, oil and gas lines, power and communication lines), Land Subdivision, Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction, Specialty Trade Contractors
Manufacturing	Food Manufacturing (human and animal consumption), Grain and Oilseed Milling, Starch and Vegetable Fats and Oils Manufacturing, Sugar and Confectionery Product Manufacturing, Fruit and Vegetable Preserving and Specialty Food Manufacturing, Dairy Product Manufacturing, Animal Slaughtering and Processing, Seafood Product Preparation and Packaging, Bakeries and Tortilla Manufacturing, Other Food Manufacturing, Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing, Textile Mills, Textile Product Mills, Apparel Manufacturing, Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing, Wood Product Manufacturing, Paper Manufacturing, Printing and Related Support Activities, Chemical Manufacturing, Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing, Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing, Primary Metal Manufacturing, Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing, Machinery Manufacturing, Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing, Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing, Transportation Equipment Manufacturing, Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing, Miscellaneous Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods, Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods, Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers
Retail Trade	Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers, Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores, Electronics and Appliance Stores, Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers, Food and Beverage Stores, Health and Personal Care Stores, Gasoline Stations, Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores, Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores, General Merchandise Stores, Miscellaneous Store Retailers, Nonstore Retailers
Transportation and Warehousing	Air Transportation, Rail Transportation, Water Transportation, Truck Transportation, Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation, Pipeline Transportation, Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Support Activities for Transportation, Postal Service, Couriers and Messengers, Warehousing and Storage
Information	Publishing Industries (except Internet), Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries, Broadcasting (except Internet), Internet Publishing and Broadcasting, Telecommunications, Internet Service Providers, Web Search Portals, and Data Processing Services, Other Information Services
Finance and Insurance	Monetary Authorities - Central Bank, Credit Intermediation and Related Activities, Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments and Related Activities, Insurance Carriers and Related Activities, Funds, Trusts, and Other Financial Vehicles
Real Estate and Rental/Leasing	Real Estate, Rental and Leasing Services, Lessors of Nonfinancial Intangible Assets (except Copyrighted Works)

Table 2 (Continued)

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Legal Services, Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services, Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services, Specialized Design Services, Computer Systems Design and Related Services, Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services, Scientific Research and Development Services, Advertising and Related Services, Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
Management of Companies and Enterprises	Bank holding and Executive Offices
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	Administrative and Support Services, Facilities Support Services, Employment Services, Business Support Services, Travel Arrangement and Reservation Services, Investigation and Security Services, Services to Buildings and Dwellings, Other Support Services, Waste Collection, Waste Treatment and Disposal, Remediation and Other Waste Management Services
Educational Services	Elementary and Secondary Schools, Junior Colleges, Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools, Business Schools and Computer and Management Training, Technical and Trade Schools, Other Schools and Instruction, Educational Support Services
Health Care and Social Assistance	Ambulatory Health Care Services, Hospitals, Nursing and Residential Care Facilities, Social Assistance, Child and Elderly Care (non-resident)
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries, Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions, Zoos and Botanical Gardens, Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries, Golf Courses and Country Clubs, Skiing Facilities, Marinas, Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers, All others
Accommodation and Food Services	Traveler Accommodation, RV (Recreational Vehicle) Parks and Recreational Camps, Rooming and Boarding Houses, Food Services and Drinking Places, Special Food Services, Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)
Other Services (except Public Administration)	Repair and Maintenance, Personal and Laundry Services, Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations, Private Households
Public Administration	Executive, Legislative, and Other General Government Support, Justice, Public Order, and Safety Activities, Administration of Human Resource Programs, Administration of Environmental Quality Programs, Administration of Housing Programs, Urban Planning, and Community Development, Administration of Economic Programs, Space Research and Technology, National Security and International Affairs

Table 3

Types of Crises

Crisis Category	*Crisis Type*	*Definition/Example*	*Key Author(s)*
Organizational Transgressions	Illegal Corporate Behavior	Intentional or unintentional activities of an agent or organization, done for the organization's benefit. Examples: conspiring to fix prices, antitrust violations, discrimination, patent infringement	Baucus & Baucus (1997), Coombs & Holladay (2002), Hearit (1999), Pearson & Clair (1998)
	Technical Breakdown Accident	Accident caused by technology or equipment failure. Example: airline crashes	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Hearit (1999), Marcus & Goodman (1991)
	Technical Breakdown Product Recall	Recall of a product because of technical or equipment failure	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Hearit (1999), Marcus & Goodman (1991), Pearson & Clair (1998)
	Megadamage	A technical breakdown accident that produces significant environmental damage. Example: the Exxon Valdez crash	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Pearson & Clair (1998)
	Human Breakdown Accident	Industrial accident caused by human error.	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Hearit (1999), Marcus & Goodman (1991)
	Human Breakdown Recall	Product recall that is a result of human error.	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Hearit (1999), Marcus & Goodman (1991), Pearson & Clair (1998)
	Organizational Misdeed with No Injuries	Occurs when management knowingly deceives stakeholders, but no injury results to stakeholders.	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Hearit (1999), Marcus & Goodman (1991)
	Organizational Misdeed with Injuries	Occurs when management knowingly places some stakeholders at risk and some are injured and/or killed.	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Hearit (1999), Marcus & Goodman (1991)
Organizational Events	Mergers and Failed Mergers	Combination (or failure to) combine, to some degree, with another organization.	Basham (2001), King (2002)
	Strikes	The stoppage or threat to stop work at an organization by a union or group of workers with specific goals of negotiation with management	Gonzales-Hererro & Pratt (1998)
	Economic Downturns Resulting in Organizational Action	Examples: downsizing or layoffs	Basham (2001); King (2002)
	Workplace Violence	Attacks on the job by organizational members or former members resulting in violence. Examples: Post Office Shootings, Sexual Harassment	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Pearson & Clair (1998)

Table 3 (Continued)

Events/ Actions Outside of Organizations Locus of Control	Rumor	The circulation of false information designed to hurt the organization.	Coombs & Holladay (2002), King (2002); Pearson & Clair (1998)
	Malevolence/ Product Tampering	Damage of products or services by an external agent that harms the organization	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Pearson & Clair (1998)
	Challenge	Confrontation by disgruntled stakeholders claiming the organization has acted wrongly. Examples: Pressure Group Activism, Boycotts	Coombs & Holladay (2002), Heath (1996), Pearson & Clair (1998)
	Shifting Political Attitudes	As the political attitudes change products, services, company ideals, etc. become less desirable to stakeholders	Basham (2001)
	Natural Disasters	Naturally occurring event that harms the organization and/or its stakeholders. Examples: Tornado, Earthquake	Basham (2001), Coombs & Holladay (2002), Gonzales-Herrero & Pratt (1998), Pearson & Clair (1998)
	Terrorist Attack	Actions by an outside agent with an array of impacts from loss of stakeholders, employees, infrastructure, collapses in demand, significant secondary effects (e.g., customer service, breakdowns in transportation and communication)	Argenti (2002), Gonzales-Herrero & Pratt (1998), Pearson & Clair (1998)

Table 4

Channels of Crisis Communication

Public or Private Channel	*Channel*	*Definition*	*Key Author(s)*
Public	Mass Media (not including the Internet)	Television, newspapers, magazines, journals, radio. The media can both be a target audience and a channel of communication	Argenti (2002), Benoit & Czerwinski (1997), Henderson (2003)
	Advertising	Television, print, radio.	Basham (2001)
	Editorial Boards	Articles, letters to the editor, newsletters, background briefs, public relations statements	Basham (2001)
	Internet	Either internal websites or external information pages. Are widely available, easily updated, flexible content, inexpensive	Basham (2001), Greer & Moreland (2003), Moore (2004), Perry et al., (2003), Snellen (2003)
	Organizational Activism	Often counter protests, typically done in response to protest or activism by pressure groups.	Heath (1998)
	Third Party Channels	Instead of directly countering assertions, a third party will make challenges to criticisms, etc. Thought that it is a softer form of confrontation, focusing on the credibility of the third party and pressure groups	Heath (1998)
Private	Informational Meetings	With key community influentials, major customers, community/ non-profit groups, ethic organizations, low income/senior groups	Basham (2001)
	Public Speaking Engagements	Often with the community or business organizations. Can be used to adopt a public negotiating stance to communicate the organization does not operate behind closed doors	Basham (2001), Heath (1998)
	Live Employee Briefings	Occur internally.	Basham (2001)
	Frequent All-Employee Updates	Email, employee newspapers, information for videos	Basham (2001)
	CEO Letters	Typically delivered to critical stakeholder groups, like shareholders	Basham (2001)

Table 5

Forms of Organizational Culture Identified by Trice and Beyer (1993)

Cultural Form	*Type of Form*	*Definition and/ or Example of Form*
Symbols	Objects	Uniforms; Physical barriers; attire; emblems of the organization such as flags, seals, certificates, diplomas, photos; physical environment; sources of identification, physical objects used to represent the organization
	Settings	Physical layout of the space; organization of the location; colors included; furnishings
	Performers and Functionaries	Individuals used to characterize the organization, e.g., Colonel Sanders for KFC
Language	Jargon and Slang	Specialized language used by those that must be learned by outsiders, e.g., NEC (Naval Enlisted Classification) or CC (Company Commander) used by the Navy.
	Gestures, Signs	Nonverbal forms of communication representing the organization or that only members of the organization know.
	Songs	Mary Kay Cosmetic's popular corporate song, "I've Got that Mary Kay Enthusiasm".
	Humor, Jokes, Gossip, and Rumor	Humor is an expression of culture tied to the organization's values and norms. Banter and jokes are also included in this category. Gossip consists of informal talk about recent events. Rumor uses 'the grapevine' to communicate information
	Metaphors	Comparisons where people reach understanding by comparing one thing to another. E.g., 'Time is money'
	Proverbs and Slogans	Proverbs are brief popular sayings, e.g., "Absolutely pure, therefore the best." (from Cadbury, Ltd.) Slogans are used to be specifically persuasive, e.g., "Just do it." (from Nike)
Narratives	Stories and Legends	Stories that are widely shared and carry a distinctive cultural meaning for the individuals communicating the story. Relation of previous experiences to present experiences.
	Sagas	Stories that focus on the heroic exploits of organizational members performed in the face of adversity.
	Myths	Stories used to explain the origins or transformation of things of great importance in the organization.
Practices	Rituals and Taboos	Rituals are simply combinations of repetitive behaviors. Those typical routines that are either performed or explicitly not performed in an organization.
	Rites and Ceremonials	Rites of Passage—e.g., induction and basic training in the US Army Rites of Degradation—e.g., firing and replacing top executives Rites of Enhancement—e.g., Mary Kay seminars Rites of Renewal—e.g., annual meetings Rites of Conflict Reduction—e.g., collective bargaining Rites of Integration—e.g., corporate Christmas party Rites of Creation—e.g., creation of new roles to bring about change Rites of Transition—e.g., rite to celebrate the change in administration Rites of Parting—e.g., rites to note the death of an organization

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Crisis Prone versus Non-Crisis Prone Organizations

Condition	*n*	*P*	*Intercoder Reliability*
Non-Crisis Prone	132	33.1	
Crisis Prone	267	66.9	
Total	399	100.0	.99

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Different Industries Experiencing Crises

Industry	*n*	*P*	*Intercoder Reliability*
Agriculture	14	3.5	
Mining	18	4.5	
Utilities	15	3.8	
Construction	3	.8	
Manufacturing	114	28.6	
Wholesale Trade	18	6.5	
Retail Trade	26	6.5	
Transportation & Warehousing	13	3.3	
Information	50	12.5	
Finance & Insurance	42	10.5	
Professional, Scientific, and Technological	30	7.5	
Management of Companies	3	.8	
Administration Support & Waste Remediation	3	.8	
Educational Services	3	.8	
Health and Social Assistance	5	1.3	
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	24	6.0	
Accommodation and Food Services	12	6.0	
Public Administration	6	1.5	
Total	399	100.0	.98

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Crisis Type

Type of Crisis	*n*	*P*	*Intercoder Reliability*
Organizational Transgression	142	35.6	.93
Illegal Corporate Behavior	92		
Technical Breakdown/Accident	9		
Technical Breakdown/Recall	9		
Megadamage	3		
Human Breakdown/Recall	6		
Misdeed without Injuries	14		
Misdeed with Injuries	9		
Organizational Events	149	37.3	.95
Mergers & Failed Mergers	66		
Strikes	18		
Economic Downturns with Organizational Action Needed	56		
Workplace Violence	6		
Events Outside the Organization's Control	108	27.1	.93
Rumor	49		
Malevolence/ Product Tampering	6		
Challenge	23		
Natural Disasters	27		
Terrorist Attack	6		
Total	399		.94

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Crisis Response Strategies Invoked During Crises

Strategy Category	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*P*	*Intercoder Reliability*
Self-Enhancement	5	1.01	.11	1.26	.75
Image Advertising	5				
Routine Communication	15	1.04	.19	3.77	.76
Annual Reports	14				
Newsletters	1				
Frame the Crisis	264	1.66	.47	66.33	.88
Accounts	61				
Information Dissemination	178				
Issue Salience	40				
Preconditioning	93				
Frame the Organization	124	1.31	.46	31.16	.86
Ingratiation	18				
Organizational Promotion	69				
Organizational Handicapping	22				
Bolstering	48				
Issue Management	22				
Supplication	9				
Defensive or Anti-Social	215	1.54	.50	54.02	.91
Noncompliance	53				
Disclaimers	11				
Defensive Compliance	17				
Evasion of Responsibility	16				
Shifting the Blame	23				
Simple Denial	63				
Strategic Ambiguity	61				
Minimization	48				
Transcendence	23				
Intimidation	26				
Accommodative	101	1.25	.44	25.38	.83
Corrective Action	58				
Apologia	13				
Compassion	15				
Eliciting Sympathy	10				
Transparency	11				
Offering Reassurances	29				
Excellence & Renewal	101	1.25	.44	25.38	.86
Exemplification	61				
Pro-Social Behavior	32				
Dialogic	26				
Interorganizational Relationships	138	1.35	.48	34.67	.84
Blaring Others	45				
Belittling Others	35				
Boasting	49				
Collaboration	76				
Blasting	20				
Burying	6				
Boosting	4				
Burnishing	22				
Total	399				.84

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Primary Strategy Category Employed by Organizations in Crisis

Strategy Category	*n*	*P*	*Intercoder Reliability*
Routine Communication	3	.8	
Framing the Crisis	118	29.6	
Framing the Organization	41	10.3	
Anti-Social or Defensive	139	34.8	
Accommodative	44	11.0	
Excellence or Renewal	18	4.5	
Interorganizational Relationships	35	8.8	
Total	398	100	.92

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for the Invocation of the Forms of Organizational Culture

Form of Organizational Culture	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*P*	*Intercoder Reliability*
Symbols	76	1.19	.39	19.05	.82
Objects	21				
Settings	18				
Performers & Functionaries	58				
Language	163	1.41	.49	40.85	.81
Jargon & Slang	114				
Gestures, Signals, & Signs	2				
Humor, Jokes, Gossip, Rumor	7				
Metaphors & Imagery	72				
Proverbs & Slogans	25				
Narratives	37				.74
Stories & Legends	10				
Myths	13				
Sagas	9				
Practices	94	1.24	.43	23.60	.88
Rituals & Taboos	52				
Rites & Ceremonies	55				
Total	399				.81

Table 12

Significant Chi-square Findings for Hypothesis 1A: Differences in CRS Categories

Based on Crisis Prone versus Non-crisis Prone Organizations

	Organization Type				
Crisis Response Strategy Category	Not Crisis Prone	Crisis Prone	χ^2	*df*	*p*
Routine Communication			4.91	1	.03
Not Present Count	131	253			
Expected Count	127	257			
Present Count	1	14			
Expected Count	5	10			
Excellence			4.24	1	.04
Not Present Count	107	191			
Expected Count	98.6	199.4			
Present Count	25	76			
Expected Count	33.4	67.6			

Table 13

Significant Chi-square Findings for Hypothesis 1B: Differences in CRS Based on Industry

Industry	Frame the Crisis[1]		Crisis Response Strategy		Accommodative[3]	
	Not Present	Present	Anti-Social or Defensive[2] Not Present	Present	Not Present	Present
Agriculture	5	9	10	4	10	4
Expected	4.7	9.3	6.5	7.5	10.5	3.5
Mining	8	10	8	10	18	0
Expected	6.1	11.9	8.3	9.7	13.4	4.6
Utilities	4	11	6	9	12	3
Expected	5.1	9.9	6.9	8.1	11.2	3.8
Construction	3	0	0	3	3	0
Expected	1	2	1.4	1.6	2.2	.8
Manufacturing	47	67	51	63	81	33
Expected	38.6	75.4	52.6	61.4	85.1	28.9
Wholesale Trade	8	10	10	8	8	10
Expected	6.1	11.9	8.3	9.7	13.4	4.6
Retail Trade	12	14	6	20	24	2
Expected	8.8	17.2	12	14	19.4	6.6
Trans/Warehousing	4	9	4	9	9	4
Expected	4.4	8.6	6	7	9.7	3.3
Information	15	35	20	30	40	10
Expected	16.9	33.1	23.1	26.9	37.3	12.7
Finance/Insurance	10	32	24	18	30	12
Expected	14.2	27.8	19.4	22.6	31.4	10.6
Prof/Sci/Tech	2	28	18	12	25	5
Expected	10.2	19.8	13.8	16.2	22.5	7.6
Mgmt of Companies	0	3	3	0	3	0
Expected	1	2	1.4	1.6	2.2	.8
Admin/Waste	2	1	0	3	1	2
Expected	1	2	1.4	1.6	2.2	.8
Education Services	0	3	2	1	2	1
Expected	1	2	1.4	1.6	2.2	.8
Health & Social Serv.	2	3	1	4	3	2
Expected	1.7	3.3	2.3	2.7	3.7	1.3
Arts/Ent/Recreation	8	16	10	14	18	6
Expected	8.1	15.9	11.1	12.9	17.9	6.1
Accommodation	4	8	8	4	7	5
Expected	4.1	7.9	5.5	6.5	9	3
Public Administration	1	5	3	3	4	2
Expected	2	4	2.8	3.2	4.5	1.5

[1] χ^2 (17, 399) = 30.14, p = .03
[2] χ^2 (17, 399) = 29.30, p = .03
[3] χ^2 (17, 399) = 29.87, p = .03

Table 14

Significant Chi-square Findings for Research Question 1B: Differences in the Invocation of the Forms of Organizational Culture Based on Industry

Industry	Form of Organizational Culture: Symbols[1] Not Present	Symbols[1] Present	Practices[2] Not Present	Practices[2] Present
Agriculture	9	5	9	5
Expected	11.3	2.7	10.7	3.3
Mining	16	2	13	5
Expected	14.6	3.4	13.8	4.2
Utilities	14	1	10	5
Expected	12.1	2.9	11.5	3.5
Construction	3	0	3	0
Expected	2.4	.6	2.3	.7
Manufacturing	103	11	93	21
Expected	92.3	21.7	87.1	26.9
Wholesale Trade	16	2	13	5
Expected	14.6	3.4	13.8	4.2
Retail Trade	23	3	18	8
Expected	21	5	19.9	6.1
Trans/Warehousing	8	5	7	6
Expected	10.5	2.5	9.9	3.1
Information	37	13	35	15
Expected	40.5	9.5	38.2	11.8
Finance/Insurance	34	8	41	1
Expected	34	8	32.1	9.9
Prof/Sci/Tech	22	8	23	7
Expected	24.3	5.7	22.9	7.1
Mgmt of Companies	3	0	3	0
Expected	2.4	.6	2.3	.7
Admin/Waste	2	1	2	1
Expected	2.4	.6	2.3	.7
Education Services	2	1	2	1
Expected	2.4	.6	2.3	.7
Health & Social Serv.	2	3	1	4
Expected	4	1	3.8	1.2
Arts/Ent/Recreation	16	8	18	6
Expected	19.4	4.6	18.3	5.7
Accommodation	9	3	9	3
Expected	9.7	2.3	9.2	2.8
Public Administration	4	2	5	1
Expected	4.9	1.1	4.6	1.4

[1] χ^2 (17, 399) = 30.73, p = .02
[2] χ^2 (17, 399) = 31.23, p = .02

Table 15

Significant Chi-square Results for Hypothesis 2: The Use of CRS by Organizations Facing Organizational Transgressions

Crisis Response Strategy Category	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Self-Enhancement	1	71	138.03	1	.00	142
Routine Communication	2	71	134.11	1	.00	142
Frame the Organization	27	71	54.54	1	.00	142
Anti-Social or Defensive	86	71	6.34	1	.01	142
Accommodative	48	71	14.90	1	.00	142
Excellence or Renewal	35	71	36.51	1	.00	142
Interorganizational Relationships	43	71	22.09	1	.00	142

Table 16

Significant Chi-square Results for Hypothesis 2: Primary Strategies Employed by Organizations Facing Organizational Transgressions

Crisis Response Strategy Category	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Framing the Crisis	31	23.7	101.72	5	.00	142
Framing the Organization	6	23.7				
Anti-Social or Defensive	61	23.7				
Accommodative	31	23.7				
Excellence or Renewal	5	23.7				
Interorganizational Relationships	8	23.7				

Table 17

Significant Chi-square Results for Hypothesis 3: The Use of CRS by Organizations Facing Organizational Events

Crisis Response Strategy Category	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Self-Enhancement	4	74.5	133.43	1	.00	149
Routine Communication	3	74.5	137.24	1	.00	149
Frame the Crisis	125	74.5	68.43	1	.00	149
Accommodative	33	74.5	46.20	1	.00	149
Excellence or Renewal	43	74.5	26.24	1	.00	149

Table 18

Significant Chi-square Results for Hypothesis 3: Primary Strategies Employed by Organizations Facing Organizational Events

Crisis Response Strategy Category	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Framing the Crisis	56	24.7	66.46	5	.00	148
Framing the Organization	24	24.7				
Anti-Social or Defensive	32	24.7				
Accommodative	7	24.7				
Excellence or Renewal	8	24.7				
Interorganizational Relationships	21	24.7				

Table 19

Significant Chi-square Results for Hypothesis 4: The Use of CRS by Organizations Facing Events Outside the Organization's Control

Crisis Response Strategy Category	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Routine Communication	10	54	71.70	1	.00	108
Frame the Organization	30	54	21.33	1	.00	108
Accommodative	20	54	42.82	1	.00	108
Excellence or Renewal	23	54	35.59	1	.00	108
Interorganizational Relationships	28	54	25.04	1	.00	108

Table 20

Significant Chi-square Results for Hypothesis 4: Primary Strategies Employed by Organizations Facing Events Outside the Organization's Control

Crisis Response Strategy Category	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Framing the Crisis	31	15.4	106.15	6	.00	108
Framing the Organization	11	15.4				
Anti-Social or Defensive	46	15.4				
Accommodative	6	15.4				
Excellence or Renewal	5	15.4				
Interorganizational Relationships	6	15.4				
Routine Communication	3	15.4				

Table 21

Significant Chi-square Results for Research Question 2: Differences in the Use of CRSs Among Organizations Facing Crises

	Crisis Type						
Crisis Response Strategy Category	OT[1]	OE[2]	EO[3]	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Routine Communication	2	3	10	12.45	2	.00	399
Expected	5.3	5.6	4.1				
Frame the Crisis	75	125	64	35.52	2	.00	399
Expected	94	98.6	71.5				
Frame the Organization	27	67	30	23.62	2	.00	399
Expected	44.1	46.3	33.6				
Anti-Social or Defensive	86	66	63	8.92	2	.01	399
Expected	76.5	80.3	58.2				
Accommodative	48	33	20	8.84	2	.01	399
Expected	35.9	37.7	27.3				
Interorganizational Relationships	43	67	28	11.84	2	.00	399
Expected	49.1	51.5	37.4				

[1]Organizational Transgressions
[2]Organizational Events
[3]Events Outside the Organization's Control

Table 22

Significant Chi-square Results for Research Question 2: Primary Strategy Categories Used Among Organizations Facing Crises

	Crisis Type						
Crisis Response Strategy Category	OT[1]	OE[2]	EO[3]	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Frame the Crisis	31	56	31	68.02	12	.00	398
Expected	42.1	43.9	32.0				
Frame the Organization	6	24	11				
Expected	14.6	15.2	11.1				
Anti-Social or Defensive	61	32	46				
Expected	49.6	51.7	37.7				
Accommodative	31	7	6				
Expected	15.7	16.4	11.9				
Excellence or Renewal	5	8	5				
Expected	6.4	6.7	4.9				
Interorganizational Relationships	8	21	6				
Expected	12.5	13.0	9.5				
Routine Communication	0	0	3				
Expected	1.1	1.1	.8				

[1]Organizational Transgressions
[2]Organizational Events
[3]Events Outside the Organization's Control

Table 23

Significant Chi-square Results for Research Question 3A: Organizational Transgression Influence on the Invocation of the Forms of Organizational Culture

Form of Organizational Culture	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Symbols	11	71	101.41	1	.00	142
Language	51	71	11.27	1	.00	142
Narratives	6	71	111.01	1	.00	142
Practices	28	71	52.09	1	.00	142

Table 24

Significant Chi-square Results for Research Question 3B: Organizational Event Influence on the Invocation of the Forms of Organizational Culture

Form of Organizational Culture	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Symbols	37	74.5	37.75	1	.00	149
Narratives	18	74.5	85.70	1	.00	149
Practices	39	74.5	33.83	1	.00	149

Table 25

Significant Chi-square Results for Research Question 3C: Events Outside of the Organization's Control Influence on the Invocation of the Forms of Organizational Culture

Form of Organizational Culture	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Symbols	28	54	25.04	1	.00	108
Language	34	54	14.82	1	.00	108
Narratives	13	54	62.26	1	.00	108
Practices	27	54	27.00	1	.00	108

Table 26

Significant Chi-square Results for Research Question 3: Differences in the Invocation of Cultural Forms by Organizations Facing Crises

Form of Organizational Culture		Crisis Type OT[1]	OE[2]	EO[3]	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Symbols		11	37	28	18.31	2	.00	399
	Expected	27	28.4	20.6				
Language		51	78	34	13.51	2	.00	399
	Expected	58	60.9	44.1				
Narratives		6	18	13	6.68	2	.04	399
	Expected	13.2	13.8	10.0				

[1]Organizational Transgressions
[2]Organizational Events
[3]Events Outside the Organization's Control

Table 27

Correlations Between CRSs Employed In Crisis Communication Messages

Crisis Response Strategy[1]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Self-Enhancement	-	-.02	-.02	.12*	-.03	-.06	.14**	.06
2. Routine Communication		-	.03	.10	-.13**	.10	.00	-.12*
3. Frame the Crisis			-	.24**	-.30**	.01	.15**	.28**
4. Frame the Organization				-	-.10	.16**	.38**	.33**
5. Anti-social or Defensive					-	-.07	-.01	.06
6. Accommodative						-	.27**	.22**
7. Excellence or Renewal							-	.46**
8. Interorganizational Relationships								-

[1]N = 399
* = significant at $p = .05$ level (two-tailed)
** = significant at $p = .01$ level (two-tailed)

Table 28

Analysis of Variance for Primary Strategy Influence on Numbers of Strategies

Primary Strategy Category	*M*	*SD*	*N*
Framing the Crisis	2.38	2.55	118
Framing the Organization	5.37	2.63	41
Anti-Social or Defensive	2.92	2.49	139
Accommodative	3.66	2.55	44
Excellence or Renewal	5.17	3.63	18
Interorganizational Relationships	6.94	3.46	35
Routine Communication	1.00	0	3

Table 29

Scheffe Post Hoc Findings for Primary Strategy Influence on Numbers of Strategies

Primary Category I	Primary Category J	*M* Diff (I-J)	*Std. Error*	*Sig.*
Framing the Crisis	Excellence or Renewal	-2.59	.68	.03
	Interorganizational Relationships	-4.37	.52	.00
Framing the Organization	Framing the Crisis	2.79	.49	.00
	Anti-Social or Defensive	2.44	.48	.00
Anti-social or Defensive	Interorganizational Relationships	-4.02	.51	.00
Accommodative	Interorganizational Relationships	-3.28	.61	.00
Interorganizational Relationships	Routine Communication	5.44	1.61	.04

Table 30

Chi-square Analysis of the Presence of CRSs in Crisis Response Messages

Crisis Response Strategy	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Self-Enhancement	5	199.5	379.25	1	.00	399
Routine Communication	15	199.5	341.26	1	.00	399
Frame the Crisis	264	199.5	41.71	1	.00	399
Frame the Organization	124	199.5	57.15	1	.00	399
Anti-Social or Defensive	215	199.5				
Accommodative	101	199.5	97.27	1	.00	399
Excellence or Renewal	101	199.5	97.27	1	.00	399
Interorganizational Relationships	138	199.5	37.92	1	.00	399

Table 31

Chi-square Analysis of Primary CRS in Crisis Response Messages

Primary Strategy Category	Observed	Expected	χ^2	*df*	*p*	*N*
Framing the Crisis	118	56.9	277.73	6	.00	398
Framing the Organization	41	56.9				
Anti-Social or Defensive	139	56.9				
Accommodative	44	56.9				
Excellence or Renewal	18	56.9				
Interorganizational Relationships	35	56.9				
Routine Communication	3	56.9				

Table 32

Chi-square Analysis Identifying Relationship Between Invocation of Each CRS to Primary CRSs

				Primary Strategy			
Crisis Response Strategy	Framing Crisis	Framing Organization	Anti-Social Defensive	Accommodative	Excellence Renewal	IOR's	Routine Comm.
Routine Comm.[1]	4	5	0	3	0	0	3
Expected	4.4	1.5	5.2	1.7	.7	1.3	.1
Frame Crisis[2]	118	35	44	22	13	32	0
Expected	78.3	27.2	92.2	29.2	11.9	23.2	2.0
Frame Org.[3]	20	41	21	11	10	21	0
Expected	36.8	12.8	43.3	13.7	5.6	10.9	.9
Anti-Social[4]	27	14	139	13	7	16	0
Expected	63.7	22.1	75.1	23.8	9.7	18.9	1.6
Accommodative[5]	12	11	17	44	9	8	0
Expected	29.9	10.4	35.3	11.2	4.6	8.9	.8
Excellence[6]	12	18	15	16	18	22	0
Expected	29.9	10.4	35.3	11.2	4.6	8.9	.8
IOR's[7]	28	18	29	18	11	35	0
Expected	40.9	14.2	48.2	15.3	6.2	12.1	1.0

Table 33

t-Test Results for Hypothesis 5: Analyzing Single versus Multiple CRS Categories Used

Strategy Category	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*SEM*
Number of Categories Used	399	1.66	.47	.02
Single Strategy Category	135			
Multiple Strategy Categories	264			

Table 34

Correlations Between the Forms of Organizational Culture

Form of Organizational Culture	1	2	3	4
1. Symbols	-	.36**	.42**	.32**
2. Language		-	.26**	.33**
3. Narratives			-	.35**
4. Practices				-

** = significant at the $p = .01$ level (two-tailed)

Table 35

Correlations for Forms of Organizational Culture and Crisis Response Strategies

	Form of Culture			
Crisis Response Strategy	Symbols	Language	Narratives	Practices
Self-Enhancement	.18**	.09	.04	.15**
Routine Communication	.07	-.03	.07	-.02
Frame the Crisis	.16**	.19**	.17**	.09
Frame the Organization	.41**	.41**	.27**	.34**
Anti-Social or Defensive	.01	.07	.07	.13**
Accommodative	.16**	.26**	.13**	.21**
Excellence or Renewal	.35**	.48**	.31**	.34**
Interorganizational Relationships	.28**	.48**	.28**	.29**

** = significant at the p = .01 level (two-tailed)

Table 36

Chi-square Findings Comparing Forms of Organizational Culture and Crisis Response Strategies

	Form of Culture			
Crisis Response Strategy	Symbols	Language	Narratives	Practices
Frame the Crisis	62**	125**	34**	69
Expected	50.3	107.8	24.5	62.2
Frame the Organization	53**	88**	26**	56**
Expected	23.6	50.7	11.5	29.2
Anti-Social or Defensive	42	95	24	62**
Expected	41	87.8	19.9	50.7
Accommodative	30**	63**	16**	39**
Expected	19.2	41.3	9.4	23.8
Excellence or Renewal	43**	82**	25**	49**
Expected	19.2	41.3	9.4	23.8
Interorganizational Relationships	47**	101**	28**	56**
Expected	26.3	56.4	12.8	32.5

** = significant at the p =.01 level

Table 37 Approaches to Crisis Response Messages

Approach	Definition	Strategies Included	Predictors of Approach	Example of Approach
Future-Oriented	CRSs emphasize moving forward, even to the point of avoiding discussing present circumstances, present situation, or practices	Self-Enhancement, Excellence/ Renewal, &/or IOR's	Crisis Prone Organizations	We are pleased by this important progress in the Multi-Union case. We will continue vigorous enforcement of our intellectual property rights to protect our innovative printers and printer supplies against unfair competition of all types including patent infringement, unsubstantiated performance claims, and counterfeiting (Epson, after winning a lawsuit against a large manufacturer of off-brand print cartridges).
Present-Oriented	CRSs emphasize tackling the crisis directly—talking about the organization's role and/or actions taken	Framing the Crisis, Framing the Organization, Anti-Social/Defensive, Accommodative, IOR's	Non-Crisis Prone Organizations	Hockey is Canada's game and it would be a disservice to all fans if the season were to be cancelled. Our members are hockey fans, but we stand in solidarity with the players and respect their rights when it comes to the collective bargaining process (Service Employees International Union in solidarity with National Hockey Player's Association during 2004-2005 NHL strike).
Aggressive	CRSs tell stakeholders what is (not) occurring and actively involves being defensive about organization's role or culpability	Framing the Crisis, Anti-Social/ Defensive	Utility Industry, Information Industry, Arts/ Entertainment/ Recreation Industry, Events Outside the Organization's Control, Organizational Transgressions[1]	Despite the inconvenience the labor action creates, Harrah's is not willing to concede on the contract link. I worry about their capacity to strike me everywhere at the same time. What they would like to do is set it up so they could do that. That's what the strike is all about, we'll just have to wait it out. We will stand firm in this position no matter how long this unfortunate situation persists. We will not ratify a contract that threatens the health of our company and that of the industry broadly (Harrah's President, Gary Loveman speaking about the 2004 Culinary workers' strike in Atlantic City).

Table 37 Continued

Defensive	CRSs emphasize denying or minimizing the organization's culpability or role, but also actively involves efforts to increase organization's image	Anti-Social/ Defensive, Accommodative	Manufacturing Industry, Administrative Support & Waste Remediation Industry, Organizational Transgressions	First and foremost our hearts and thoughts are with the family of our lost co-worker. IPG is committed to the highest employee safety standards and is leading the investigation into the cause of this incident. We have also offered counseling to those workers affected by this unfortunate event (Intertape Polymer Group Inc.'s VP of Human Resources, Burgess Hildreth, on an explosion in a factory in 2005).
Explanative	CRSs endeavor to create good will while explaining the crisis—characterized by openness, engagement, and an appearance that the organization is sympathetic to the situation	Framing the Crisis, Accommodative	Accommodation Industry, Finance/ Insurance, Organizational Events, Organizational Transgressions[1]	Allow the drug testing program to work. I commend Bud Selig, the players union, and all the players for trying to put together a testing program that tries to satisfy everyone. I look forward to the day when this thing will blow over. You guys (the media) need to turn the page. Let us play the game and we will fix it. I don't believe steroids can help your hand-eye coordination in hitting a baseball. I don't know if steroids will help you in baseball (Barry Bonds first statement to the media after the Steroids Policy put in place in MLB in 2005).
Offensive	CRSs endeavor to create many possibilities to appeal to many different stakeholder groups by including a variety of strategies in a single message	Any of the strategies in combination with three or more prominent strategies in the message	Transportation & Warehousing, Health & Social Assistance, Public Administration, Organizational Transgressions[1], Organizational Events[1]	The rule of thumb, of course, is that you should generate more cash than you consume. But what we said is that it looks like we'll consume $2 billion more than we generate this year. It's entirely a North American issue. North America, simply put, is our 800 pound gorilla. Today's announcement really shows how important it is that we get this business right. We are fighting for every single sale. We want to be smart. We want to offer the best value. But we're fighting for every tenth of a point we can get (GM's spokesperson Toni Simonetti and CEO Rick Wagoner addressing the company's poor performance).

Table 37 Continued

Single Strategy	Simple CRSs emphasizing only a single strategy in the message.	Any of the strategies.	Professional/ Scientific/ Technological Industry, Management of Companies Industry, Educational Services Industry, Mining Industry, Construction Industry, Retail Trade Industry, Agriculture/ Forestry/ Hunting/ Fishing Industry, Wholesale Trade Industry	It's a deeply disappointing day for us. The store in Jonquiere has been struggling for sometime economically, and in our view the union's demands failed to take into account the fragile condition of the store (Wal-Mart spokesperson Andrew Pelletier on closing a store in Quebec after continued efforts to unionize on the part of the employees).
Image-Oriented	CRSs emphasize maintenance or re-building the organization's image despite the crisis by making claims about the organization's 'character'	Excellence, Framing the Organization	Not clearly identified in analyses of Independent Variables alone; however strong correlation between the strategies suggests a potential approach.	

[1]This is a potential strategy employed, but was not directly supported by these data.

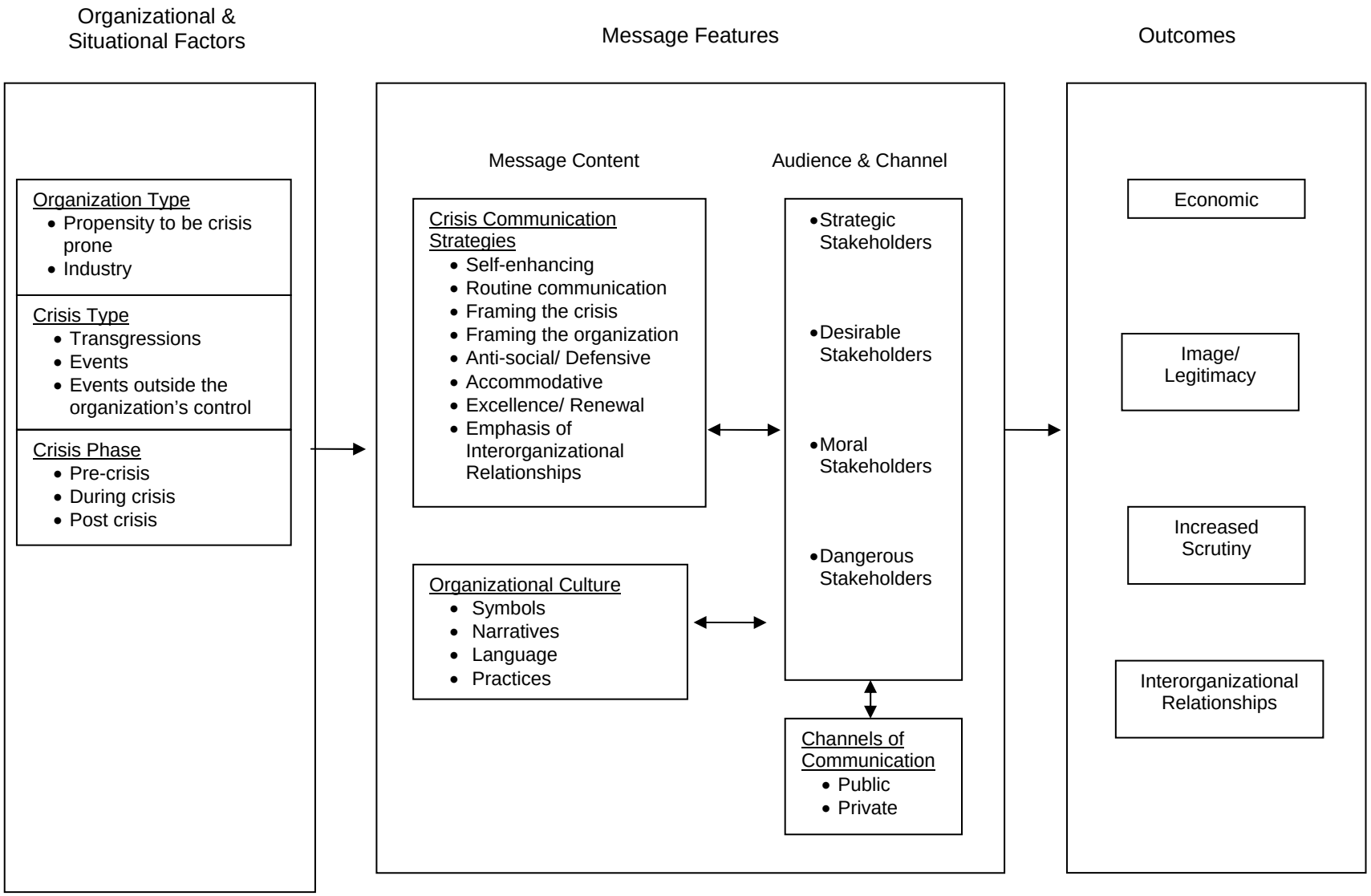

Figure 1. Strategic Model of Organizational Crisis Communication

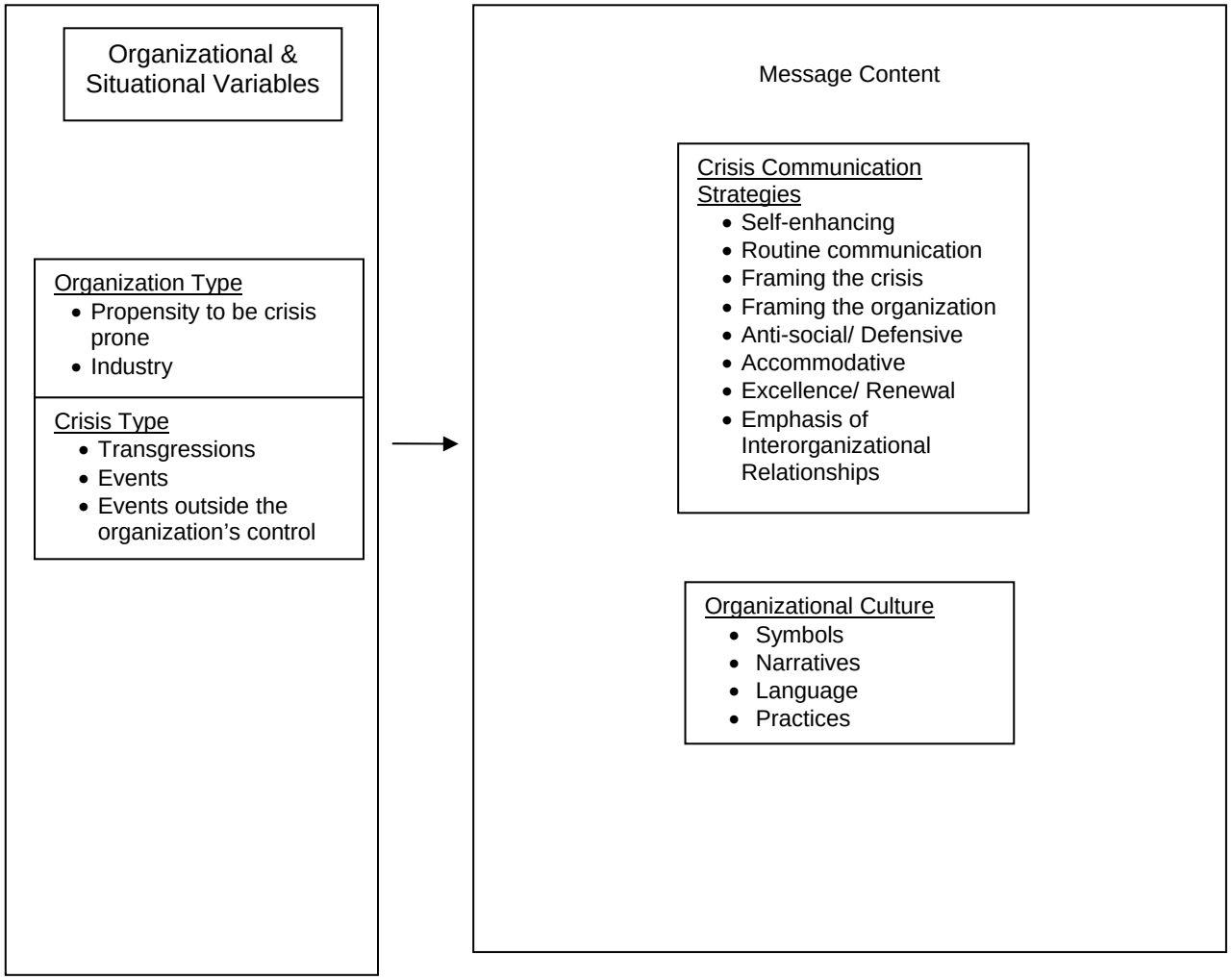

Figure 2. Elements of Strategic Model of Organizational Crisis Communication Tested in Present Research

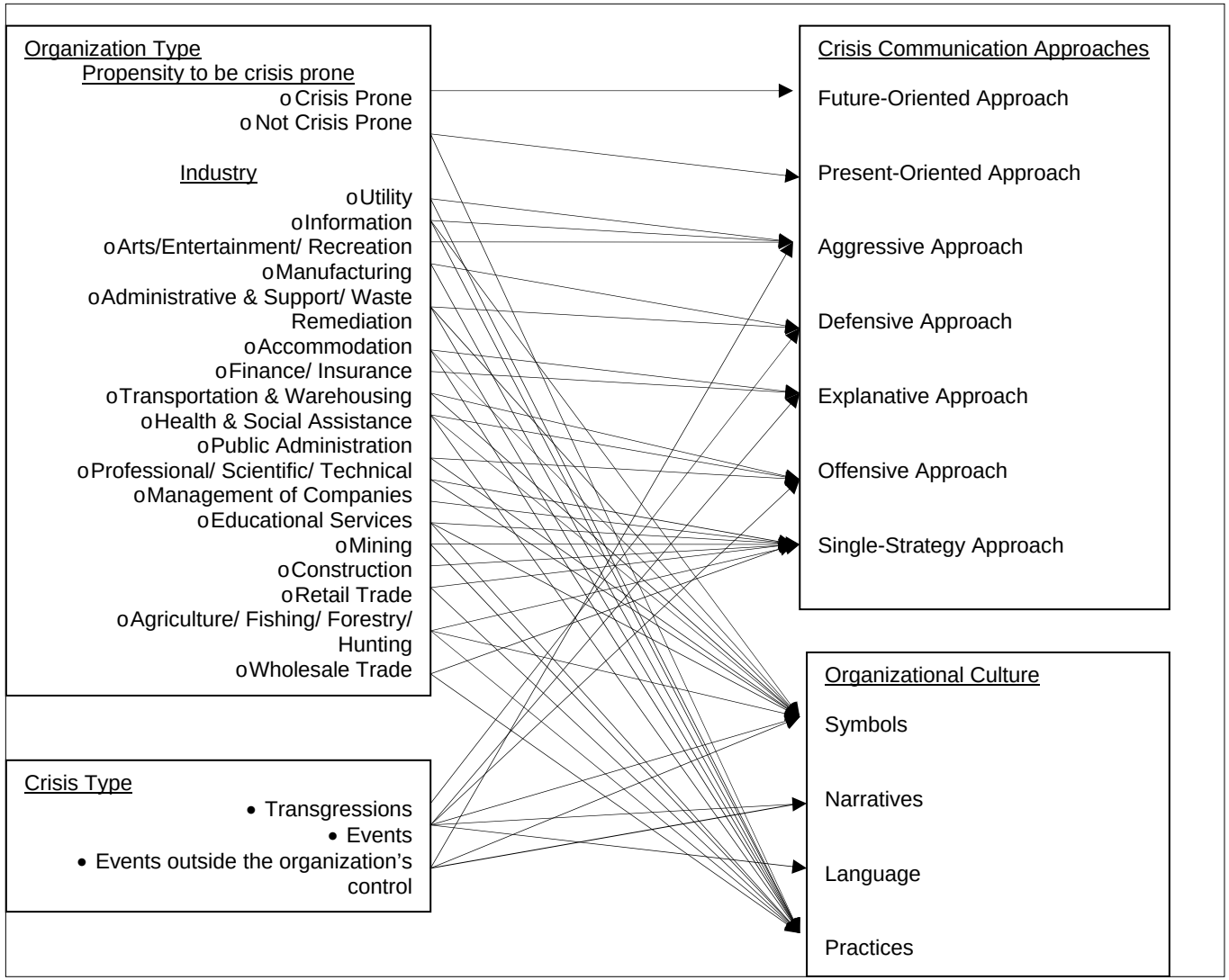

Figure 3. Significant Findings for the SMOCC

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Vita

Audra Rebecca Diers was born in Denver, Colorado on August 21, 1975, the daughter of Claire Dolores Diers and Gordys Kurt Diers. After completing her work at Fruita Monument High School in Fruita, Colorado in 1993. She then entered Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. She received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication from Colorado State University in August, 1997. After graduation she attended the University of Wyoming. After receiving her Master of Arts degree in Communication and Mass Media in 1999, Audra attended the University of Texas-Austin for her doctorate in Organizational Communication focusing her research on the communication of image.

Starting in July, 2006 Audra will be the Director of Forensics at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Her previous teaching experience includes: being an adjunct Instructor and Director of Debate for Mesa State College in Grand Junction, Colorado from 2004-2006; being an Assistant Instructor at the University of Texas at Austin from 1999-2002 and 2003; being a Lecturer and the Director of Forensics at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas from 2002-2003; and being the Assistant Coach for the University of Wyoming Forensics team from 1997-1999.

Through that time, Audra has also done a significant amount of organizational research and consulting including projects: in 2005 for Baird Creek Equine Services in Temecula, California; from 2003-2004 for the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault in Austin, Texas; and in 2004 for D'Amato and Son Fine Foods in Martinez, California;

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Audra has recent publications in *Parliamentary Debate*, and *The National Forensics Journal*. Additionally, she has presented four recent professional assessment reports to consulting clients and 16 papers at either the National Communication Association or International Communication Association annual conferences.

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